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**Khirbet Qeiyafa in the Shephelah: Papers Presented at a Colloquium of the
Swiss Society for Ancient Near Eastern Studies Held at the University of
Bern, September 6, 2014**

Edited by: Schroer, Silvia ; Münger, Stefan

Abstract: Excavations at the Early Iron Age site of Khirbet Qeiyafa (Israel), directed from 2007 to 2011 by Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor under the auspices of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Antiquities Authority, have attracted considerable scholarly and media attention since the very second season, when the discovery of an inscribed ostrakon sparked controversies over the site's historical significance and nature. Located at the entrance of the Elah Valley, protected by a casemate wall and two monumental gateways, the settlement of Qeiyafa existed for barely half a century. Its dating and the correlation of the archaeological evidence with the regional history, not least the rise of an early Judahite monarchy, have become matters of intense academic debate. Resulting from a colloquium of the Swiss Society for Ancient Near Eastern Studies, this volume offers a condensed report by main excavator Yosef Garfinkel as well as several in-depth studies on archaeological, historical, epigraphical, iconographical and biblical issues.

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Susanne Bickel, Thomas C. Römer, Daniel Schwemer
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Editors

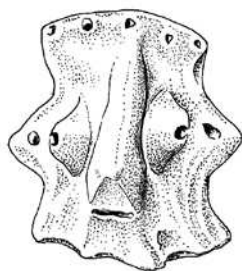
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Silvia Schroer / Stefan Münster (eds.)

Khirbet Qeiyafa in the Shephelah

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Editors' Preface

It is unusual that an archaeological site, which was previously practically unknown, electrified archaeologists of the Southern Levant and biblical scholars in such a short time and equally made headlines not only in scholarly literature, but also in newspapers throughout the world. The excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa at the entrance to the Elah Valley, carried out by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Antiquities Authority and directed by Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor, caused sensation from the very beginning. Already in the second year of excavation an inscribed ostrakon was found, which was widely and controversially discussed among scholars. Later, other spectacular finds followed, e.g., the two shrine models discovered at the very end of the 2011 season, which are analyzed in depth in this publication.

The dating of the archaeological remains also created attention, for according to the excavators the settlement, which was enclosed by a wall with two gates, only existed for a relatively short time-span of 50 years during the 10th century BCE – the time of the early Judahite Monarchy. From the moment at which the excavations were associated with the name of David, the first great king of Judah and Israel, Khirbet Qeiyafa was on everyone's lips. Immediately, vigorous debates erupted about the dating of the remains, the biblical identification of the site, and the ethnic allocation of the material culture.

Meanwhile, buses soon brought archaeologically interested tourists to the small parking lot near the foot of the hill, since an excavation with such spectacular and coherent horizontal exposure of an ancient town is rare: walls, gate complexes, dozens of houses one beside the other next to the casemate wall, rooms with indications of cultic activity, plazas and even a small quarry could all be seen at this one site.

The discussions about the finds and findings from Khirbet Qeiyafa among the scholarly community are at times quite heated, not just in Israel. When we invited the members of the Swiss Society for Ancient Near Eastern Studies (SGOA) to a conference on September 6, 2014 with the excavator Yosef Garfinkel and other renowned presenters, it was our aim to facilitate scholarly discussion without undue excitement and at a level at which the main issues could be easily understood. Thanks to the informative and factual contributions, we were able to achieve this aim. The conference participants were able to get a good overview of the significance of the site, the excavations, individual finds and the archaeological and cultural-historical context. Encouraging feedback has led us to make the results of the conference available to the wider public through the series 'Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis'. Even though publications discussing Khirbet Qeiyafa are quite numerous, particularly in Israel and in the English-speaking world, based on its concise layout and content the present volume should nevertheless prove useful to readers. In response to the comprehensive, though naturally condensed, report of the excavator, the con-

tributions of Aren Maeir (Bar Ilan University) and Thomas Römer (University of Lausanne/Collège de France) formulate scholarly questions and comments from various angles and at times also express disagreement. Further contributions continue the discussion about some particular subjects: Benjamin Sass (Tel Aviv University) on the epigraphic corpus of Khirbet Qeiyafa; Stefan Münger (University of Bern) on some details of the material culture; Silvia Schroer (University of Bern) on the iconography of the shrine models. A short epilogue by Ernst Axel Knauf (University of Bern) concludes the present volume.

We want to express our thanks to Yosef Garfinkel for his presence and his considered discussion. We also thank all the colleagues who presented at the conference and later provided these presentations to us in written and edited form. For the co-organization of the conference our thanks go to Dr. Patrick Wyssmann. We gratefully present his bibliography on Khirbet Qeiyafa in an appendix. We would also like to thank Tim Frank for his revision and correction of the language and grammar of the contributions. Nancy Rahn and Myriam Röthlisberger helped us in the preparation of the manuscript.

We thank the executive committee of the Swiss Society for Ancient Near Eastern Studies (SGOA) for the friendly support of the conference and the inclusion in its conference series. We are grateful to the editors of the series ‘*Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis*’ and to SGOA for including this publication in the series and for the financial support, respectively.

Bern, August 2016

Khirbet Qeiyafa in the Shephelah: Data and Interpretations

Yosef GARFINKEL

Khirbet Qeiyafa is a 2.3-hectare site located in the Shephelah region of Israel. During seven excavation seasons (2007–2013), ca. 20% of the site was uncovered and a large fortified city of the Iron Age IIA was unearthed. The radiometric dating of this city to the early 10th century BCE is based on 27 samples. As the city was destroyed suddenly, very rich assemblages of finds in various categories were retrieved. The new data completely change our understanding of the early 10th century BCE in the Shephelah, a poorly known era prior to the Khirbet Qeiyafa excavations. The results of the excavation bear out the biblical tradition relating to state formation processes in Judah as early as 1000 BCE, the time of King David.

Since the 1980s, various scholars have attempted to create an alternative understanding of the birth of the Judean Kingdom, claiming that it was founded only at the end of the 8th century BCE (300 years after King David) or at the end of the 9th century BCE (200 years after King David). The new results from Khirbet Qeiyafa, a fortified city in Judah from the time of King David, severely challenge these approaches. It is therefore not surprising that various aspects of the site and its interpretation are hotly debated.

Introduction

A number of European explorers visited Khirbet Qeiyafa during the 19th century: Victor Guérin (1868: 331–332), Claude Reignier Conder and Horatio Herbert Kitchener (1883: 118). In the latter's summary list of Arabic and English names, the site appears in Arabic as Khirbat Kiafa, translated as “the ruin of tracking footsteps” (Conder and Kitchener 1881: 308). During the 20th century the site was neglected; it is not referred to in the works of the leading scholars in the field of biblical historical geography, such as William Foxwell Albright, Benjamin Mazar, Yohanan Aharoni or Zecharia Kallai. In the 1980s, an extensive archaeological survey was conducted in the Shephelah region by Yehuda Dagan (1993). He gives the first detailed description of the site and includes a map, which mentions an “upper” and a “lower” city. In the early 2000s, Zvi Greenhut surveyed the site and drew up a schematic plan of the upper city and its city wall (Greenhut *et al.* 2001: 115–117). None of these surveys, however, recognized the large fortified city of the 10th century BCE.

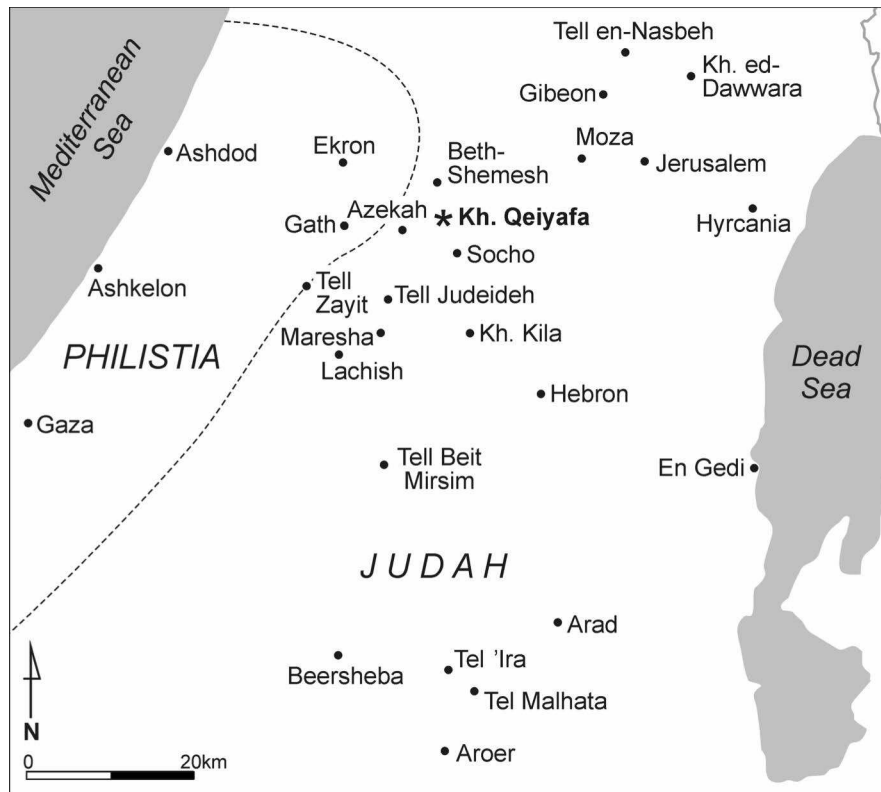


Fig. 1: Map of the southern Levant and the location of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

Thus, in 2007, when we started to excavate the site, the name “Khirbet Qeiyafa” was still virtually unknown both to archaeologists and to the public. In 2008, however, Khirbet Qeiyafa became world-famous when the New York Times dedicated a full page to a description of the site, its excavation and the preliminary results. Why has the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa attracted so much interest? In order to illuminate the huge contribution of the site to archaeology, history and biblical studies, the following article is organized in three parts: (1) the data, (2) interpreting Khirbet Qeiyafa in the context of modern research, and (3) Khirbet Qeiyafa and the biblical tradition.

Part I: The Data

1. Location

Khirbet Qeiyafa is located ca. 30 km southwest of Jerusalem in the western part of the Upper Shephelah (Israel Grid 19500–622700) on the summit of a hill that borders the Elah Valley on the north. This is a regionally strategic location on the main road from Philistia and the coastal plain to the hill country. Two kilometers to the west is Tell Zakariyeh, commonly identified as biblical Azekah, and 2.5 km to the southeast is Khirbet Shuwayka, commonly identified as biblical Socho. About 12 km west of Khirbet Qeiyafa is Tell eš-Šafi, the major Philistine city of Gath. In the 10th and 9th centuries BCE Gath was a prominent city-state, over 30 hectares in size. It was the largest political unit in the region and the closest to Khirbet Qeiyafa (*Fig. 1*).

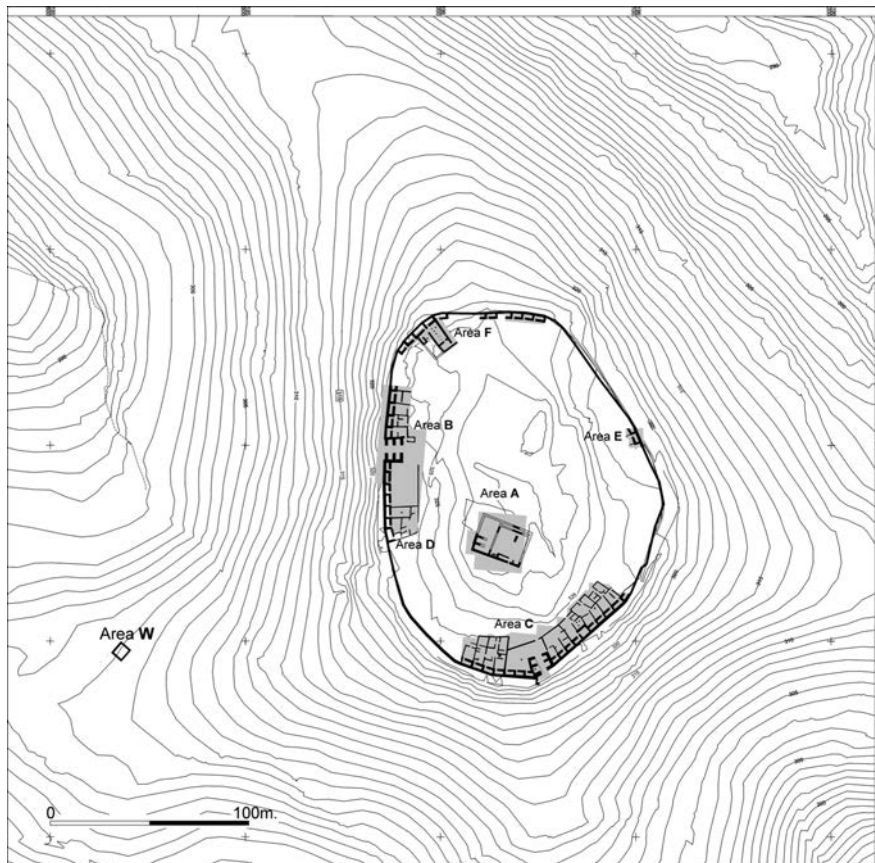


Fig. 2: Map of Khirbet Qeiyafa and its vicinity.

2. The Site

The site of Khirbet Qeiyafa is not a classic Near Eastern tell, a multi-layered mound with a thick accumulation of remains caused by human activity, but rather a short-lived site with only a shallow accumulation (*Figs. 2–4*). Many of its remains still stand to this very day. In addition, about 30% of the site's area consists of exposed bedrock lacking any archaeological accumulation. The excavations revealed a long sequence of periods represented (*Table 1*): Late Chalcolithic, Middle Bronze Age, Iron Age IIA, Late Persian-Early Hellenistic, Early Roman, Late Roman-Byzantine, Early Islamic and Late Islamic. In addition, a later wall encircled Khirbet Qeiyafa, mainly on the west and also on the east. This wall, which enclosed an area of 16 hectares, was probably built in the Ottoman period (Davidovich 2009). This long sequence gives the impression that Khirbet Qeiyafa is a tell site with a deep accumulation of archaeological sediments. However, in large parts of the site bedrock is exposed above the topsoil and there are basically only a few short episodes of occupation.

<i>Stratum</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Type of occupation</i>
I	Ottoman	Farm, lime kiln
	Early Islamic	Agricultural terraces
IIa	Late Roman-Byzantine	Fortified farmstead and agricultural settlement, mainly in Area A
	Early Roman	No architectural remains
IIb	Late Hellenistic (Hasmonean)	One building in Area F
IIIa	Phase 2: Late Persian-Early Hellenistic	Fortress and administrative center
IIIb	Phase 1: Late Persian-Early Hellenistic	Fortress and administrative center
IV	Early Iron Age IIA (ca. 1000 BCE)	Fortified city
V	Middle Bronze Age	No architectural remains
VI	Late Chalcolithic	No architectural remains

Table 1: The settlement history of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

3. Methodology and the Excavations

In 2007 to 2013 a large-scale excavation project was launched on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, directed by Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor. In 2009–2011 Michael Hasel of the Southern Adventist University joined the project as an associate director (Garfinkel and Ganor 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2009, 2010, 2012a, 2013, 2014; Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c, 2014; Garfinkel *et al.* 2009; Garfinkel, Kreimerman and Zilberg 2016).

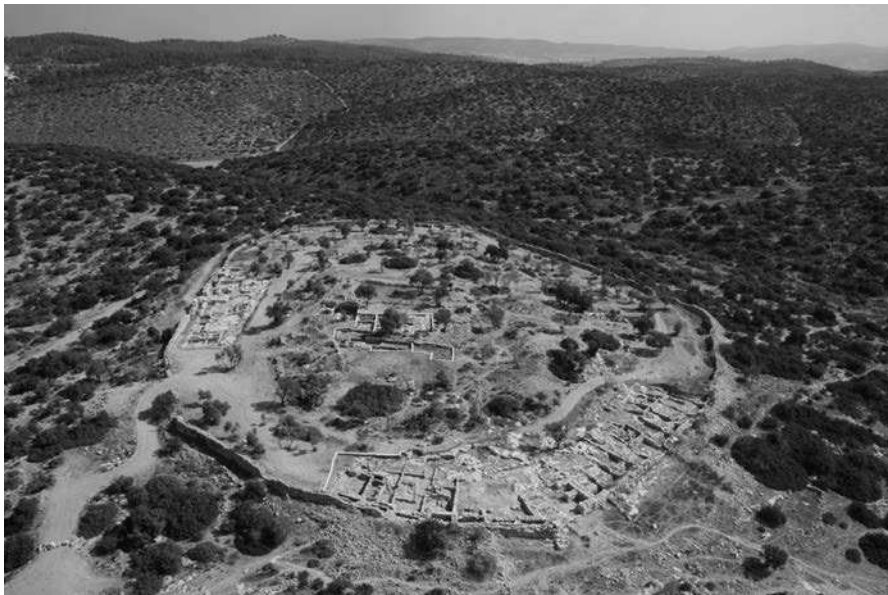


Fig. 3: Aerial photograph of Khirbet Qeiyafa at the end of the 2012 excavation season (looking north).



Fig. 4: The Iron Age city of Khirbet Qeiyafa at the end of the 2013 excavation season (looking south).

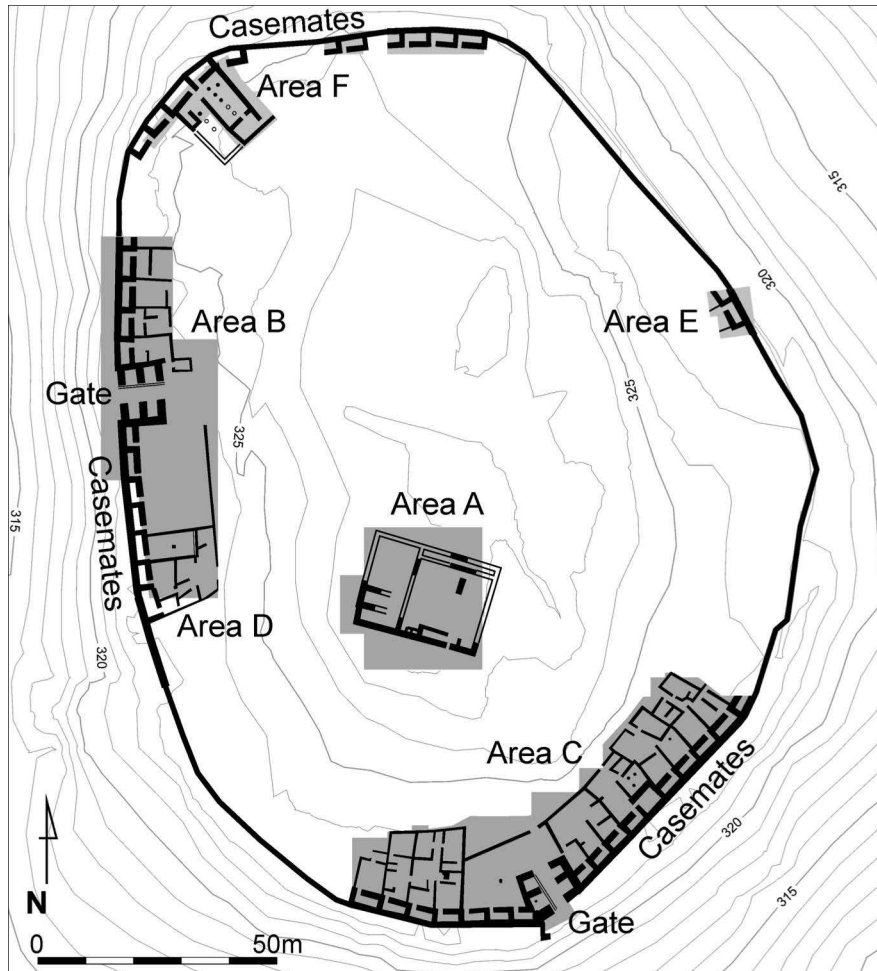


Fig. 5: Plan of the Iron Age city of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

There are a number of methodological factors that guided our work at Khirbet Qeiyafa:

- *Choosing the Site*: Khirbet Qeiyafa is a relatively small site (2.3 hectares) with a short-lived occupation (two main periods), thin accumulation (two meters maximum) and a rich Iron Age layer. Only a short time was needed to uncover a meaningful sample of the Iron Age city.
- *Size of Horizontal Exposure*: Our aim was to uncover 20–25% of the site, providing a significant sample of the city wall, gates, dwellings and public buildings.
- *Sampling Strategy*: Various parts of the site were tested (Areas A–F), each including a number of dwellings.



Fig. 6: Area A: the large administrative building below the Byzantine fortified farmstead in the central and highest location in the city. The thick black lines indicate the location of relevant walls that were removed during the excavations.

- *Timeframe for Field Project*: The field project was limited in time, consisting of seven excavation seasons altogether.
- *Excavation Strategy*: Complete architectural units were excavated. In each square (5×5 m) an experienced archaeologist supervised 3–4 volunteers. This high ratio of staff to volunteers ensured careful excavation and documentation. All collapsed sediments above floors were sieved by means of a 2 mm mesh, which retrieved a large number of small finds such as seals, scarabs, beads, bone artifacts and small metal objects. Bones of microfauna (2–3 mm) were collected by wet sieving by means of a 1 mm mesh.
- *Documentation*: The careful documentation of the stratigraphic relationship of walls, usage of raw materials, and stone size is instructive in the study of the city's building process. Photographs were constantly taken, as well as aerial photographs at the end of each season.

During seven excavation seasons the expedition examined six areas inside the fortified city of Khirbet Qeiyafa, as well as a small-scale investigation in an area located some 100 m to the west (Fig. 5).

Area A

In the central, highest part of Khirbet Qeiyafa, excavated as Area A, about 1000 m² were uncovered (Fig. 6). Major remains of a large rectangular build-

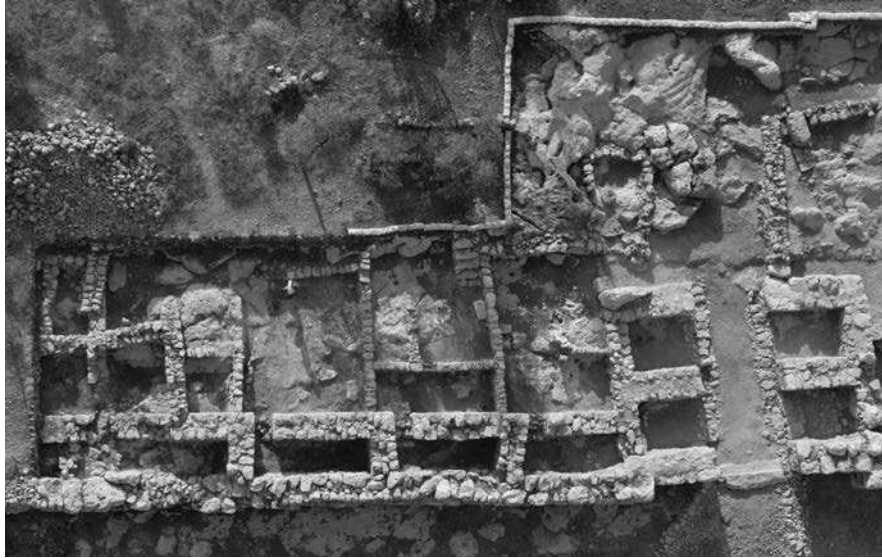


Fig. 7: Aerial photograph of Area B at the end of the 2011 excavation season.

ing, a fortified farmstead of the Byzantine period whose maximum measurements are 43×37 m, were visible here even before excavation began. In the center of the building was a large open courtyard with leveled bedrock exposed in some parts. Two large cisterns were cut into bedrock, the opening of one of them was covered by a modern cast concrete frame. This building complex is closed on its eastern, southern and western sides by a row of rooms and on the northern side by a massive wall. Since excavation of this building was not completed, various aspects of its plan remain unclear. It was built in the Byzantine period (4th–6th centuries CE) and was rebuilt during this period, perhaps as a result of earthquake damage. As this building was founded on bedrock, most of the earlier remains in this spot were obliterated. However, fragmentary remains of several periods were observed below the building: a late Second Temple period silo and *miqve* (ritual bath), sporadic activities of the Late Persian-Early Hellenistic periods, massive Iron Age walls, and Middle Bronze Age pottery and sediments in bedrock cavities.

The remains of the large Iron Age building included a 30 m long wall with its southeastern and southwestern corners. The wall is two to three times wider than those of the regular Iron Age houses uncovered in Areas B, C and D, an indication of a structure some three stories high.

Area B

Part of the western side of the site was excavated as Areas B and D (Fig. 7). This part of the site was selected for excavation because the survey of the site indicated that a city gate might be located here. About 800 m² were opened



Fig. 8: Aerial photograph of Area C at the end of the 2012 excavation season.

(Kang 2014a). The uppermost architectural remains were from the Late Persian-Early Hellenistic period, dated on the basis of coins found here and in other excavation areas to 350–270 BCE. Below these, the expedition uncovered the remains of the Iron Age city, constructed on bedrock. The fortifications included a four-chambered city gate with a massive *in situ* threshold and a casemate city wall, with houses abutting the wall and incorporating the casemates as their rear rooms. While the Late Persian-Early Hellenistic layer was peacefully abandoned, the Iron Age city was destroyed suddenly and rich destruction debris was unearthed in every building. In the second building north of the gate we found the famous Qeiyafa ostrakon, an inscription written in ink on a pottery sherd.

Area C

Part of the southern side of the site was excavated as Area C, because the survey of the site indicated that an additional city gate might be located here (Fig. 8). About 1800 m² were opened, the largest horizontal exposure at the site (Freikman and Garfinkel 2014). The uppermost level dates from the Late Persian-Early Hellenistic period, and below it the Iron Age city was found, built on bedrock. Two earlier periods were represented as well, though they lacked architecture: Late Chalcolithic finds were found in a limited spot and Middle Bronze Age pottery sherds were scattered all over. The massive Iron Age architecture included a four-chambered gate, a gate piazza that extended along three casemates and five dwelling units. Here the same town plan as in Area B was uncovered, with houses at the edges of the city abutting the casemate wall



Fig. 9: Aerial photograph of Area D at the end of the 2011 excavation season.

and incorporating the casemates as their rear rooms. With the destruction of the Iron Age city, the houses collapsed and the floors were found covered with hundreds of broken pottery vessels, stone implements, metal artifacts made of bronze and iron, bone implements, beads, Egyptian scarabs and seals. In two houses the expedition uncovered cultic rooms, rich in installations of various kinds and cultic paraphernalia.

Area D

This area is adjacent to Area B on the south. Nearly 1000 m² were uncovered (*Fig. 9*). The uppermost remains are again dated to the Late Persian-Early Hellenistic period and included a large structure (some 700 m² in area) that contained an olive oil press (Hasel 2014). The Iron Age remains included a large Iron Age gate piazza with one building adjacent to it.

Area E

Part of the eastern side of the site was excavated as Area E (*Fig. 10*). Only two squares, ca. 50 m², were opened and part of a casemate city wall was uncovered (Kang 2014b). The preservation at this location was very impressive, with the city wall standing to a height of over three meters.



Fig. 10: Aerial photograph of Area E at the end of the 2011 excavation season.



Fig. 11 Aerial photograph of Area F at the end of the 2013 excavation season.



Fig. 12: Aerial photograph of Area W at the end of the 2012 excavation season.

Area F

Part of the northern side of the site was excavated as Area F, in which ca. 350 m² were uncovered (*Fig. 11*). The expedition started work here to obtain more information about the city wall casemates and the pattern of their openings. After the excavation of nearly 50 m along the city wall at different spots, we finally located a point at which the openings of two casemates were found adjacent to one another, unlike the regular pattern. At exactly this spot a large pillar building was uncovered, with some of the pillars still in their original position. The building was extensively reused in the Late Persian-Early Hellenistic era.

Area W

This area is located some 100 m west of the fortified Iron Age city (*Figs. 2, 12*). During a survey of the site conducted by Uri Davidovich, a massive corner of a building was observed. In the seasons of 2012 and 2013 about 100 m² were uncovered. The excavations revealed an isolated square tower, probably used by local farmers. All the pottery here was of the 7th century BCE, including three jar handles with rosette impressions, which are typical of this period in Judah. A fragment of a clay female figurine of the type known as the “Judean pillar figurine” was uncovered.

The location of the excavated areas all over the site gave us a good picture of the fortification system, the peripheral belt of dwellings and two large ad-

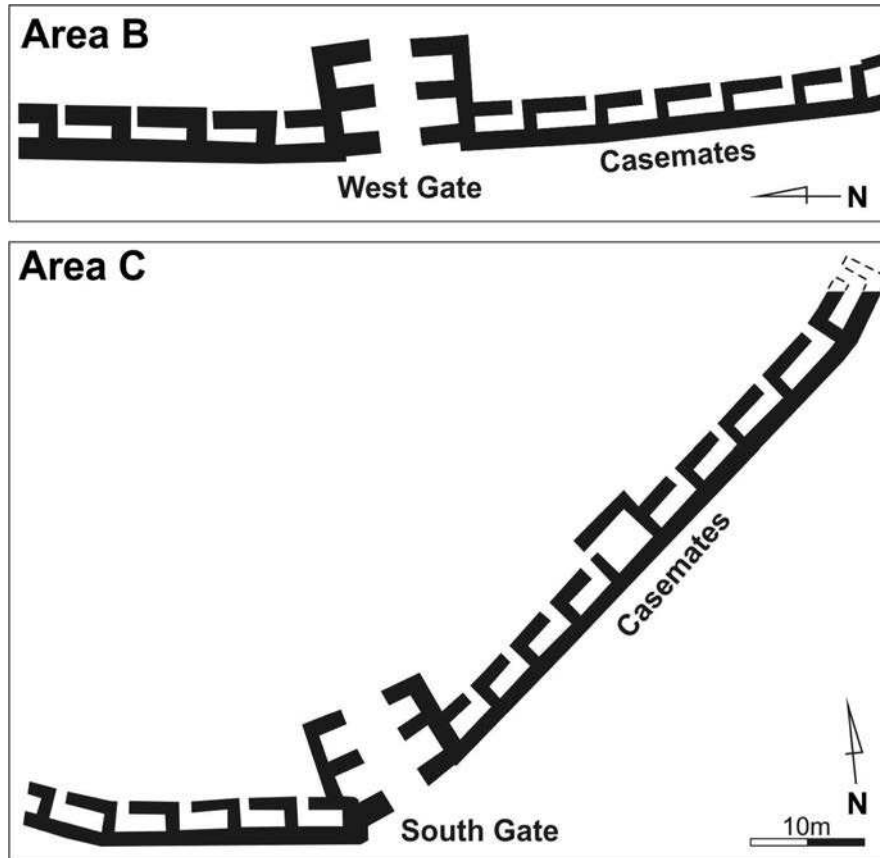


Fig. 13: Schematic plans of the two Iron Age city gates of Khirbet Qeiyafa and the adjacent city wall. Note that all the casemate openings are located in the corner furthest from the gate.

ministrative buildings, one in Area F and the other in Area A. The Iron Age city was destroyed suddenly, as indicated by the numerous artifacts uncovered on the floors of each building. Altogether thousands of pottery vessels, hundreds of stone tools and dozens of metal artifacts were uncovered. Hence, the Khirbet Qeiyafa excavations have produced an extremely rich material culture assemblage dated to the late 11th/early 10th century BCE.

4. The Iron Age City

Thanks to the shallow accumulation and the massive stone construction, it was possible to uncover a large part of the Iron Age city during a relatively short time. During seven excavation seasons in 2007–2013, ca. 20% of the city was



Fig. 14: Stable room in Building C2, with three pillars and two feeding troughs.

uncovered and most of the features relevant to an ancient city were revealed (Garfinkel and Ganor 2009; Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel 2010, 2011b, 2012b):

City wall

A total of nearly 300 m of the city wall was excavated in Areas B, C, D, E and F, and altogether 26 complete casemates and 16 segments of casemates were uncovered (*Figs. 7–11, 13*). The outer wall is the more massive; it is about 1.5 m wide and was built of large stones, sometimes 2–3 m long and weighing up to 8 tons. The inner wall is composed of a solid wall, parallel to the outer one, and short perpendicular walls that divide the space into casemates. The inner wall was less massive, about 1 m wide, and was usually constructed from medium-sized stones weighing 100–200 kg. The average length of a casemate is about 6.5 m. Since the city wall is approximately 600 m long, there appear to have been approximately 90 casemates around the city. The openings of the casemates are consistently located in the corner that is furthest away from the city gate. In many cases, steps or staircases led down to the interior floor level of the casemates. This is because the city wall was built on a slope and the outer wall is at a lower level than the inner one.

Watchtower and stable

In Area C, the fifth casemate northeast of the gate is twice the width of an ordinary casemate and has thicker walls. The unusually thick walls were constructed to support a greater weight than elsewhere, and hence this casemate was higher than the others. This appears to have been a watchtower, located at

	<i>Southern gate</i>	<i>Western gate</i>
Location in site	Opens onto the road descending directly to the Elah Valley and thence toward Jerusalem	Opens onto the road going west toward Philistia
Description of gate	Four chambers	Four chambers
Width of entrance	3.9 m	3.9 m
Gate façade	Monumental stone on each side: the most imposing gate façade known in Israel	Large stones
Threshold	No threshold found: robbed?	Single 8-ton stone with rock-cut step
Drainage channel	Located in the gate passage, on the left side as one enters the city	Located in the gate passage, on the left side as one enters the city
Covering of drainage channel	Most cover stones are missing	Original cover stones <i>in situ</i>
Location of gate piazza	To the left of the entrance	To the right of the entrance
Length of gate piazza	Three casemates	Four casemates
Casemate wall	Abuts the gate on the eastern side; the western side is incorporated into the casemate	Abuts the gate on both sides
Location of casemate entrances	In the right corner of casemates to the right of the gate and in the left corner of casemates to the left of the gate	In the right corner of casemates to the right of the gate and in the left corner of casemates to the left of the gate
Standing stone	Large standing stone found <i>in situ</i> in the center of the first chamber on the left as one enters the city	No standing stone found inside the gate, but the area of the gate underwent major changes in a later period; a standing stone in secondary use was found in a wall of a house abutting the left side of the gate

Table 2: Comparison of the two gates at Khirbet Qeiyafa (*Fig. 15*).

a strategic point where the road approaching the city from the Elah Valley was visible.

Abutting this tower was a stable, a square structure with three massive stone pillars and two troughs (*Fig. 14*).

Two gates

Two city gates were uncovered at Khirbet Qeiyafa, one in the west in Area B (*Figs. 7, 9*) and one in the south in Area C (*Fig. 8*). Both gates were identified prior to their excavation, thanks to surveys conducted around the city wall. In these locations the small stones of the upper and later external city wall were not found above the massive stones of the Iron Age, but instead blocked an opening between the large stones. In both cases the width of the blocked opening, 3.9 m, was identical. What opening in the city wall could be blocked if not a gate? Indeed, within a few weeks two large and impressive gates were being

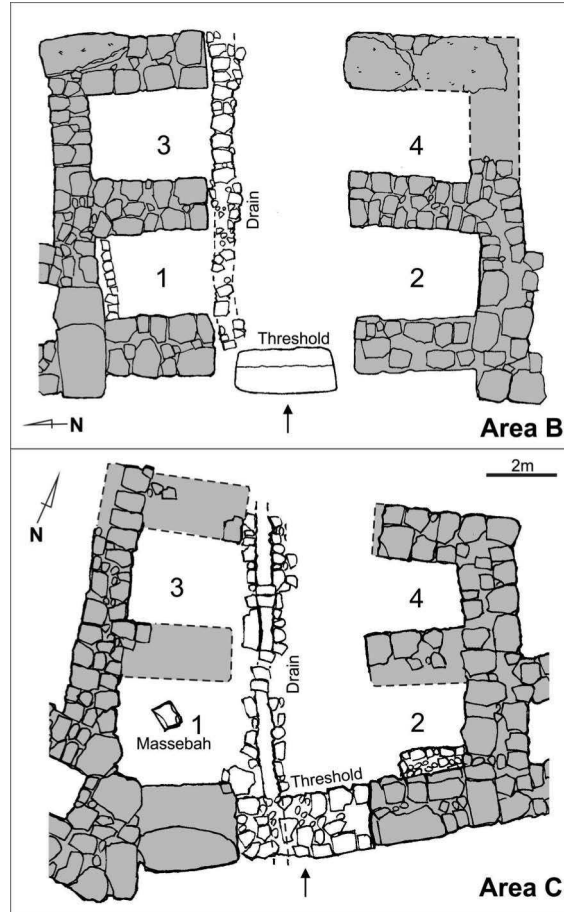


Fig. 15: Schematic plans of the two Iron Age gates of Khirbet Qeiyafa. Both gates were the same size and had the same plan and a drain in their left-hand side. The openings of the city wall casemates are always located away from the gate (see Fig. 13).

uncovered. *Fig. 15* and *Table 2* summarizes the data on each gate and shows how similar they are to each other.

Large open piazzas

Adjacent to the interior of each gate was an open piazza (*Fig. 16*). In this area the casemate wall was freestanding and no houses abutted the inner wall. The piazza next to the southern gate is 20 m long and extends along three casemates. This area is bounded on the south by the casemate wall and the city gate, on the east and west by buildings and on the north by a massive wall. An opening in the latter wall, 2 m wide, provided the only access into the city. This would have made it possible to control movement through this narrow

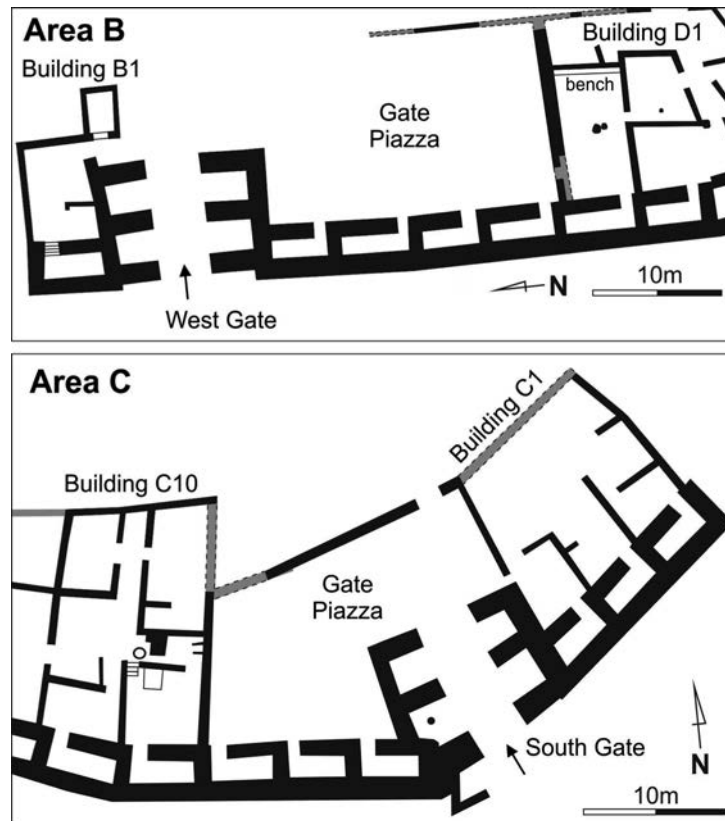


Fig. 16: Schematic plans of the two Iron Age gate piazzas of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

opening, so that not everyone who was allowed into the piazza could proceed into the city. The piazza next to the western gate is 30 m long and extends along four casemates. This area is likewise enclosed on all four sides: on the west by the city wall and gate, on the north and south by buildings and on the east by a long wall.

The gate piazzas of Khirbet Qeiyafa are noteworthy for an additional feature unknown at other sites: adjacent to each of them is a cultic room. Although each of the houses next to the gate has a number of rooms, the room that borders the gate piazza was selected to serve as the focus of cult. In the ancient world the populace did not enter temples but gathered next to them in an open area where a variety of activities could be carried out, such as sacrifice of animals, worship or dancing. The gate piazzas of Khirbet Qeiyafa apparently served in this way for cultic activity, particularly during holidays, when populations living in nearby villages or even at greater distances would make pilgrimages to the site. The enclosure of these piazzas by walls confined these visitors to the gate piazzas while denying them access to the inner parts of the city.

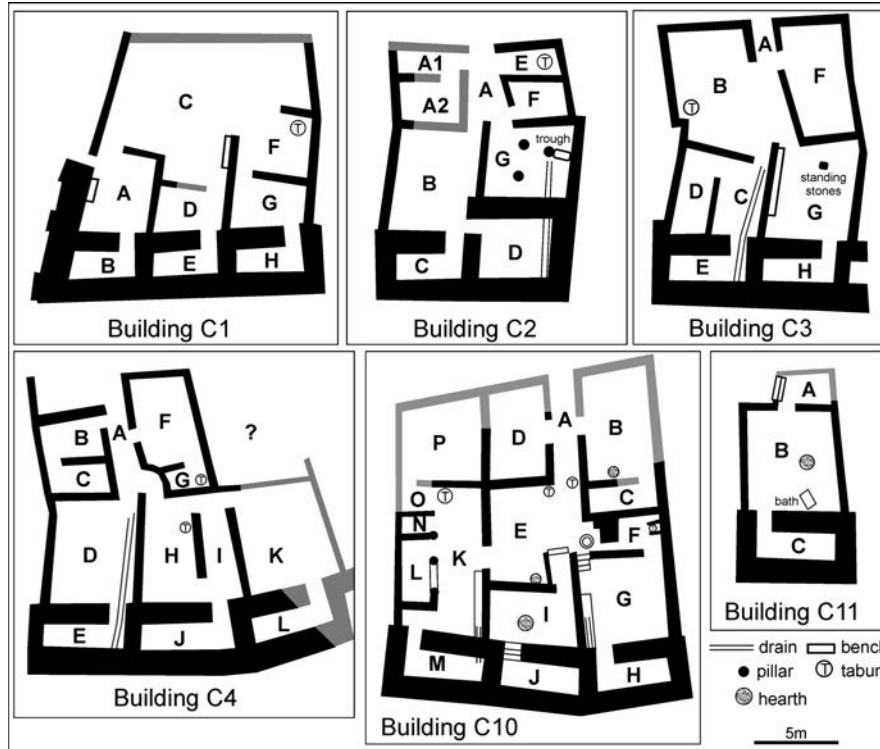


Fig. 17: Schematic plan of the buildings in Area C. Two cultic rooms were found in this area: Room G in Building C3 and Room G in Building C10.

A peripheral belt of houses abutting the city wall

A belt of buildings abutting the city wall and incorporating the adjacent casemates as rooms was found in each of the excavation areas next to the city wall, in Areas B, C, D, E and F (Figs. 7–8). In Area B four casemates were uncovered completely, each forming part of a dwelling that incorporated the casemate as its rear room.

In accordance with the above mentioned excavation goals, complete architectural units, 11 buildings in total, were uncovered in Areas B, C and D. The uncovering of entire buildings enables us to understand their plan, the size of their rooms, and their spatial organization. In Area C each building seems to have had an open courtyard, several rooms, a number of casemates, and often a corridor connecting its different parts (Fig. 17). In the courtyards we often found *tabuns* for cooking, showing that this activity was conducted out of doors. Table 3 summarizes the data for all of the buildings in Area C, in accordance with the nature of the different spaces and their number in each house. The large size of the houses and the arrangement of rooms around a

central courtyard seem to indicate that an extended rather than a nuclear family occupied each building. If this is the case, it is possible that there were similar large buildings in Area B as well and that Buildings B2 and B3 are actually not two separate buildings but two wings of a larger complex. Since the eastern side of these buildings had been completely eroded, this interpretation cannot be examined by further excavation.

<i>Building</i>	<i>Courtyards</i>	<i>Corridors</i>	<i>Rooms</i>	<i>Casemates</i>	<i>Total spaces</i>
C1	C		A, F, G, D	B, E, H	8
C2	B	A	A1, A2, E, F, G	C, D	9
C3	B	A	C, D, F, G	E, H	8
C4	I–H	A	B, C, D, F, G, K	E, J, L	12
C10	E, K	A, O	B, C, D, F, G, I, L, N, P	H, J, M	16
C11			A, B	C	3

Table 3: Summary of the different spaces in Area C by building (Fig. 17).

A large pillared storage building

In Area F the excavations uncovered a large rectangular building, 11×15 m in size and with an area of ca. 160 m² (Fig. 11). The building had two halls, each 12 m long with a row of pillars in the center, in addition to smaller rooms in front of the halls. One of these halls was completely excavated and the other only partly. Since the structure was reused in the Late Persian-Early Hellenistic period, a complete Iron Age assemblage that could indicate its exact function could not be retrieved. However, this is clearly not a typical dwelling unit like those uncovered in Areas B, C and D, but a much more massive building of public or administrative character. Buildings of a generally similar plan were elsewhere used for storage or commerce, or as stables (Kochavi 1998). They are indicative of a strong central authority that collects taxes and redistributes them to the relevant part of the population.

A major public building

A large and massive building occupied the highest point of the site, near its center, in Area A (Fig. 6). Even after the major damage caused by the construction of the later Byzantine fortified farmstead, the Iron Age building was preserved to a length of 30 m on its southern edge, with its southeastern and southwestern corners. The walls are two to three times wider than those of the regular Iron Age houses uncovered in Areas B, C and D. Their sheer width indicates a structure about three stories high. As this building was also located at the highest point of the site, it must have been an impressive statement in the city and in the entire regional landscape. It is a clear case of the use of architecture to symbolize political power. This was the central building in the city, apparently the seat of the governor and the local administration.

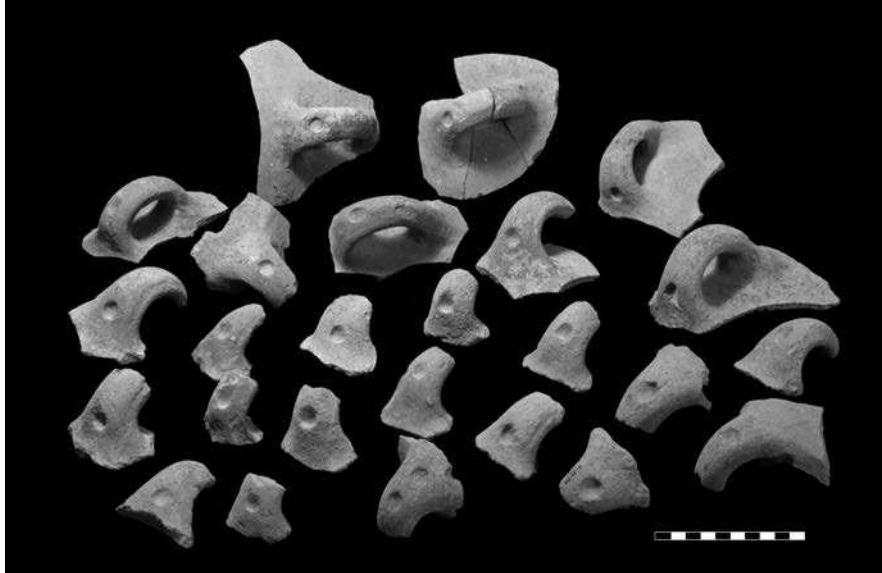


Fig. 18: Finger-impressed handles; nearly 700 such handles have been found in the excavated area.

Stone quarries

The outer city wall of Khirbet Qeiyafa was constructed of very large stones, sometimes 2–3 m long and 4–8 tons in weight. Where did these large stones come from? Ancient quarries of the Bronze or Iron Ages have only seldom been reported. Shiloh and Horowitz (1975) found that the quarries in the hill country were located at *nari* outcrops on the mounds themselves or on their slopes. The natural bedrock of Khirbet Qeiyafa is indeed *nari* and most of the walls were built from *nari* stones.

During our fieldwork, stone quarries were noticed at various areas within the city. The first quarry was already identified in the 2009 season in Area B. This spot includes a concentration of large stones (1–1.5 m long) cut from all four sides, but not yet removed. Further studies on this aspect were conducted in the 2012 excavation season. A concentration of quarrying activity was noticed near the southern city gate, in Area C (Keimer 2014). These observations indicate that the large stone blocks were quarried from inside the city and slid down the slope, just a few meters in each case. Thus, there was not one central quarry at Khirbet Qeiyafa, but many *ad hoc* locations.

The data presented above clearly indicate that the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa in the Iron Age was a well planned city. A pleasing symmetry is evident in the urban layout. The two gates are almost identical: each has a drain on the left of the entrance, next to each is a large open piazza, and the openings of the case-



Fig. 19: Ashdod Ware I vessels from Khirbet Qeiyafa, imported from the nearby Philistine territory.

mates in the city wall are always located in the corner farthest from the gate. Adjacent to each piazza is a cultic room.

Thanks to the large horizontal exposure, we are able to study how the Iron Age city of Khirbet Qeiyafa was physically constructed: the stages of work, the sources of raw materials and the division of labor (Keimer, Kreimerman and Garfinkel 2015).

5. *The Finds*

The Pottery Assemblage

The pottery assemblage uncovered in 2007–2008 was published in our first excavation report (Kang and Garfinkel 2009a, 2009b). Hoo-Goo Kang is now proceeding with the analysis of the assemblage, including the pottery uncovered in the entire seven years of excavation, a task that will probably be completed in the near future (for the time being, see Kang 2013).

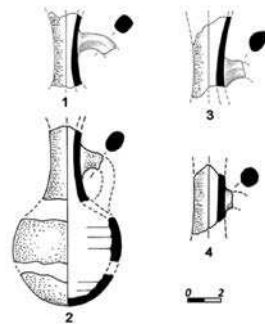


Fig. 20



Fig. 21

Black Juglets from Khirbet Qeiyafa (left) and a small barrel-shaped juglet of Cypriot Black-on-White ware from Khirbet Qeiyafa (right).

Four different categories of pottery vessels were found. The first and largest group is simple local ware, including a limited number of vessel types: shallow, rounded bowls, shallow, carinated bowls, kraters with an inverted upper part and two to six handles, simple juglets, simple jugs, strainer jugs, cooking pots with an inverted rim, baking trays and storage jars that usually have a finger impression on one or more of the handles (*Fig. 18*). Most of these vessels lack decoration. Red slip, sometimes irregularly hand burnished, appears very rarely on a bowl or a jug. Petrographic analysis has shown that this pottery is made from the local clay that characterizes the Elah Valley.

The second group of pottery is composed of medium-sized vessels of Ashdod Ware (Kang and Garfinkel 2009b): strainer jars, pyxides, bottles, juglets and chalices (*Fig. 19*). The items are covered with red slip and painted with horizontal white and black lines. The vessels are made from loess and sandy clay and are hence not locally made but imported from a production center in the coastal plain (Ben-Shlomo 2009).

The third group consists of small closed vessels, known as “Black Juglets” (*Fig. 20*). Three of these were imported to the site from Transjordan (Cohen-Weinberger and Panitz-Cohen 2014). The fourth group consists of two barrel-shaped juglets of Cypriot Black-on-White ware (*Fig. 21*; Gilboa 2012; Gilboa and Waiman-Barak 2014). Cypriot vessels of the Black-on-Red family, which is characteristic of the late 10th century BCE, were not found at Khirbet Qeiyafa.

Metal and Stone Tools

The rich destruction layer at Khirbet Qeiyafa yielded over thirty iron and bronze tools, mainly weapons: swords, daggers, arrowheads, spearheads and one bronze axe (*Fig. 22*). Only few of these have been published previously (Garfinkel 2009a). The large number of iron implements is unusual for this



Fig. 22: Assortment of weapons: iron daggers, iron swords, a bronze axe and bronze arrowheads, found in different buildings at Khirbet Qeiyafa.

period and attests to the special importance of this site and its military role. Three iron swords were found together in a cultic room in Area D. Weapons are known to have been kept in temples in the ancient Near East (Rowe 1940, Pl. XXXII, 1–15) and this is also referred to in the Bible; thus, e.g., Goliath's sword was kept in a cultic place (1 Samuel 21:10). Two pottery crucibles with bronze slag were found as well, evidence for smelting activities on site.

Over two hundred stone vessels were found (Cohen Klonymus 2014). The stone tools were made from hard limestone, soft limestone, chalk, basalt, beachrock, flint and other minerals. Large lower grinding stones were made from local compact brecciated Mishash flint, an outcrop of which is located a few kilometers east of the site. It was much easier to exploit this local deposit than to import heavy basalt slabs from a distance of a hundred kilometers or more. Nevertheless, some houses contained heavy basalt slabs as well. A few fragments of small alabaster vessels were discovered, probably indicative of trade connections with Egypt.

Animal Bones

A large assemblage of animal bones was discovered in the Iron Age IIA city. This was analyzed by the expedition's zooarchaeologist Ron Kehati (2009). No pig bones were uncovered.

Scarabs, Seals and Other Small Finds

Various small finds were retrieved from the destruction layer of the Iron Age IIA city of Khirbet Qeiyafa. Many of these were found during the extensive sieving of the site's sediment through 2 mm mesh. These include Egyptian scarabs, locally made stamp seals, stone beads and incised bone pendants. These interesting find categories are currently under analysis (on the seals, see for the time being Schroer and Wyssmann 2012; Klingbeil 2016).

Exchange Networks

Trade is a strong indicator of the various direct and indirect connections maintained by the city. It may also point to the city's level of social organization and economic strength. The level of international connections can usually be measured by the quantity of items that arrived from different distances. At the Iron Age city of Khirbet Qeiyafa, there were trade connections with both near and far entities:

- a. Trade connections within a radius of 10–20 km: Pottery vessels of Ashdod Ware were imported from Philistia (*Fig. 19*). The ornamentation of these vessels typically includes red slip as well as painted horizontal black and white lines. These relatively small vessels, with a volume of up to two liters, were apparently used to transport specialty products such as spices, medicines or special drinks. Some storage jars with finger impressions arrived at the site from the southern Shephelah, indicating a certain level of trade in foodstuffs.
- b. Trade connections within a radius of 100–150 km: Basalt vessels found at the site included simple implements such as grinding stones and grinding plates, as well as a finely crafted and polished bowl and a basalt altar decorated with a floral pattern. One may also classify in this category the copper that was used for the manufacture of bronze tools. The Black Juglets from Transjordan are another indication of networks within this distance (*Fig. 20*).
- c. Cypriot and Egyptian imports: Two pottery juglets that originated in Cyprus were discovered at the site. They are decorated with painted black bands and concentric circles on a white background (*Fig. 21*). The Egyptian imports included scarabs, Egyptian faience amulets and small vessels made of alabaster. It is clear that all the items in this category are luxury artifacts. As bronze tools were found at the site, there was a need for the import of tin, which could have come from Turkey.

6. Radiometric Dating

Two radiometric projects were conducted. The results of the first project were fully published (Garfinkel *et al.* 2012). Based on 10 measurements of burnt

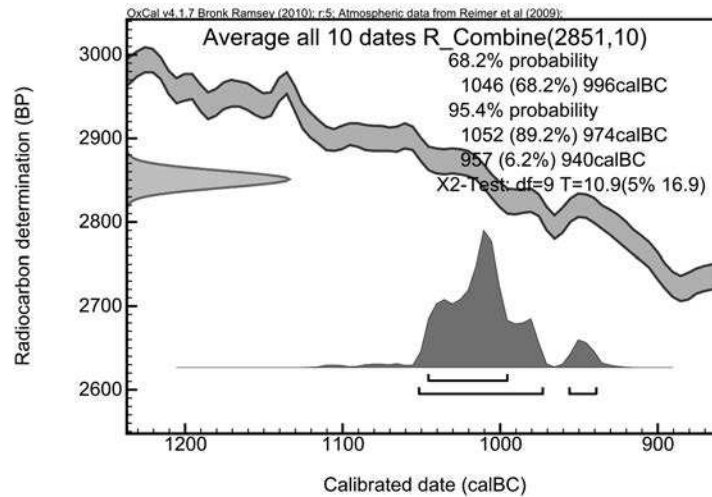


Fig. 23: Khirbet Qeiyafa's first radiometric project: calibrated probability distribution of the average of 10 determinations.

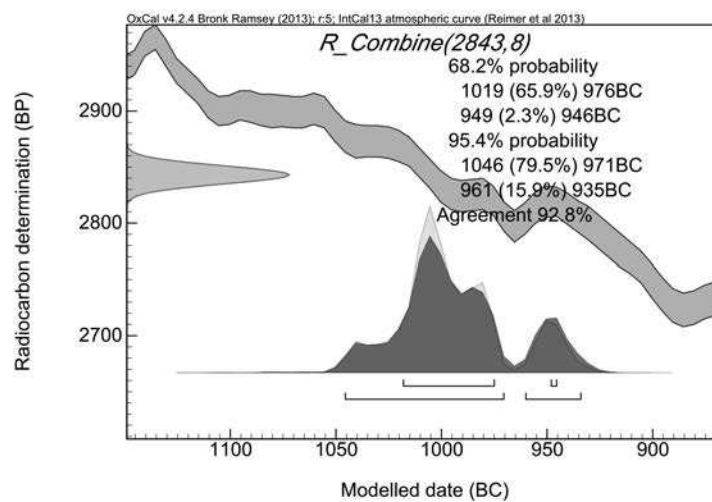


Fig. 24: Khirbet Qeiyafa's second radiometric project: calibrated probability distribution of the average of all 17 determinations from JarC11747 shown with the IntCal13 calibration curve.

olive pits, it is clear that the Iron Age IIA city of Khirbet Qeiyafa came to an end sometime between 1020 and 980 BCE (*Fig. 23*). The practice of averaging the samples of the first radiometric project in order to assign an absolute date to Khirbet Qeiyafa has been criticized (Finkelstein and Piasetzky 2010: 85; Gilboa 2012: 17–18). In the view of these authors, the earliest radiometric date from Khirbet Qeiyafa represents the date of the site's construction, while the

latest date is the date of its destruction. Accordingly, the site existed for nearly 130 years from ca. 1050 to 925 BCE.

The expedition has already supplied a detailed reply to these claims (Garfinkel and Kang 2011: 178–180; Garfinkel *et al.* 2012). We see two methodological problems here. First, the single occupation phase observed in the Iron Age layer could not have lasted for 130 years. Second, the new analysis is based on only one radiometric date each for the construction of the city and for its destruction. This is clearly in contradiction with the principle that radiometric dating should not be based on a single sample. Furthermore, since Khirbet Qeiyafa was destroyed in a violent event, and since the site was inhabited in a single phase for a short period of time, it is likely that the great majority of the samples originate in a date close to the site's destruction. Therefore, averaging the dates of Khirbet Qeiyafa (which also passes the χ^2 test) is reasonable. In any case, we agree that it is better to average samples found in one secure context. Such a context was unearthed in the 2012 excavation season at Khirbet Qeiyafa, when almost twenty burned olive pits were found inside a storage jar in the destruction layer. Now a second radiometric project has been conducted with 17 measurements (*Fig. 24*; Garfinkel *et al.* 2015). In essence, the same dating was obtained in both projects. It is clear that the city came to an end in ca. 970 BCE at the latest. The radiometric datings from Khirbet Qeiyafa challenge the various versions of the low chronology and support the high chronology.

Another strategy to overcome the early radiometric dating of Khirbet Qeiyafa was to place the site within the late Iron Age IB rather than the early Iron Age IIA (Singer-Avitz 2010, 2012; for a Hellenistic dating, see Dagan 2009). However, the pottery assemblage, with its Black Juglets and Cypriot barrel-shaped juglets, clearly places the Iron Age city in the Iron Age IIA (Garfinkel and Kang 2011; Gilboa 2012; Cohen-Weinberger and Panitz-Cohen 2014).

The new type of material culture, imported Cypriot pottery and writing tradition have enabled us to identify an early subphase in the Iron Age IIA of the region, as summarized in *Table 4*.

<i>Cultural phase within Iron Age IIA</i>	<i>Cultural characteristics</i>	<i>Sites</i>
Late 11 th /early 10 th century BCE	Infrequent red slip and irregular hand burnish; archaic (Canaanite) script; import of Cypriot barrel-shaped juglets; early Ashdod Ware	Khirbet Qeiyafa, Khirbet ed-Dawwara, Beth-Shemesh 4, Arad XII, Beersheba VII
Second half of 10 th century/early 9 th century BCE	Irregular hand burnish on bowls, sometimes in geometric patterns; early Phoenician-Hebrew script; import of Cypriot Black-on-Red vessels	Beth-Shemesh 3, Lachish V, Tel Zayit
Mid- to late 9 th century BCE	Very common red slip and irregular hand burnish; late Ashdod Ware	Tell eš-Šafi IV, Lachish IV

Table 4: Division of the Iron Age IIA in Judah and the Shephelah into three chronological phases and the prominent characteristics of each phase.



Fig. 25: Cultic Room G in Building C3.



Fig. 26: Two standing stones found in Cultic Room G in Building C3.



Fig. 27: Twin-cup pottery libation vessel from Cultic Room G in Building C3.

7. Cult

Substantial data on the cult of the inhabitants of Khirbet Qeiyafa were obtained thanks to the large horizontal exposure that includes large open areas, public buildings and 11 dwellings containing over 60 rooms (Garfinkel 2009b, 2013; Garfinkel and Ganor 2009, 2012a; Garfinkel, Ganor and Mumcuoglu 2015).

Standing Stones

The standing stone, the biblical *massebah*, is one of the more common cultic objects in the ancient Near East. Typically, it is an elongated stone with a rounded top that was placed on its narrow end. In most cases a natural stone was chosen for this purpose and signs of intentional shaping are absent or minimal. Seven standing stones were uncovered in the Iron Age II city of Khirbet Qeiyafa.



Fig. 28: A basalt altar restored from two parts, each found on a different side of Cultic Room G in Building C3.

Cultic Room G in Building C3

The quantity and quality of architectural features, installations and paraphernalia indicate that this room functioned as a cultic space. The room was equipped with special installations and finds, including a bench, a sink-hole with a connection to a drainage system that was found in the adjacent room to the south, two standing stones, an offering table, a rounded installation built of stones and containing a Black Juglet, a rectangular installation in the southeastern corner and a limestone basin (Figs. 25–26). Room G is notable for the rich destruction debris accumulated on its floor, which included, as well as a very large amount of pottery vessels, the following cultic paraphernalia: a basalt altar, a libation vessel consisting of two conjoined round cups, a seal and an Egyptian scarab (Figs. 27–28).

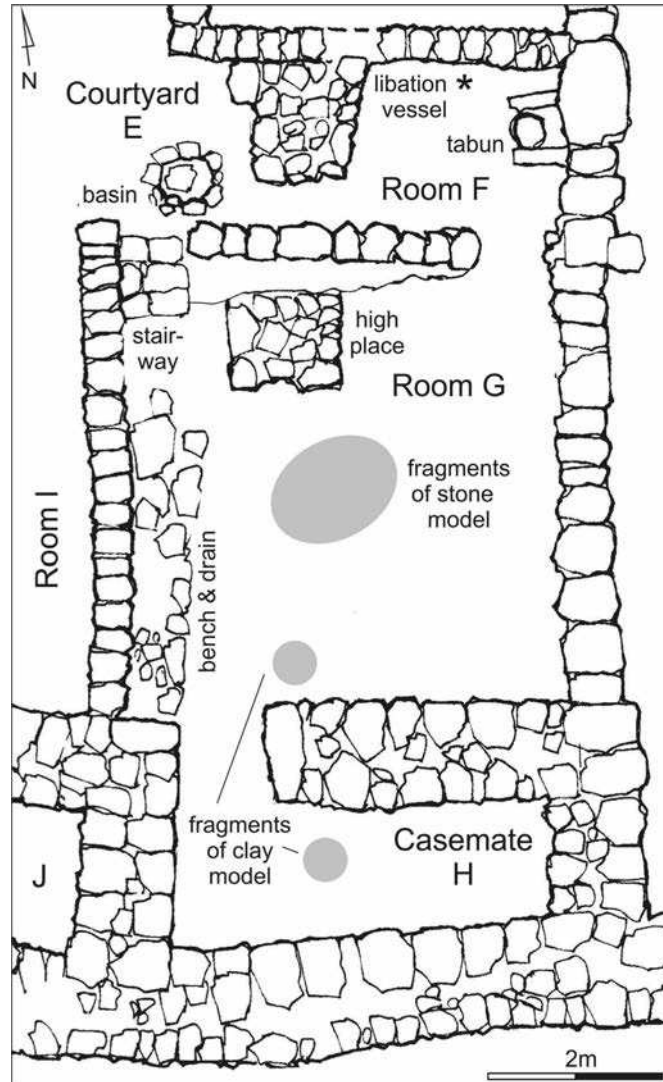


Fig. 29: Plan of the cultic area in the southeast corner of Building C10.

Cultic Room J in Building D1

Building D1 is the first building south of the gate of Area B. This area was excavated by Prof. Michael Hasel of Southern Adventist University. Of the 11 different architectural spaces that can be defined in the building, one, located adjacent to the gate piazza, was identified as a cultic room. This room was furnished with a bench, a standing stone and an offering table, and contained

among other finds three iron swords. A libation vessel with two rounded cups of the type found in Cultic Room G of Building C3 was found in an adjacent room.

Cultic Room G and Related Cultic Contexts in Building C10

Building C10 is the first building to the west of the gate in Area C. It is located ca. 20 m from the gate, across the inner piazza. The cultic activity here was concentrated in the southeastern corner of the building, mainly in Room G (Fig. 29). Additional cultic activity was identified in the areas around this room. Two exceptional artifacts uncovered in Room G are model shrines, one made of clay and the other of limestone:

- a. A “Model shrine” made of clay. This item is 11 cm wide and 16 cm high (Figs. 30–31; Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel 2012a: 150–153; Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2013). While the sides and back are simple, the façade is elaborately decorated to resemble a temple entrance, including two lions, two columns, ribbons tied to the columns and three beams above the entrance, above which is a rolled curtain. On the beams are circles scored with vertical parallel lines, apparently representing roofing beams laid perpendicularly to the entrance and extending beyond it. Three birds perch on the roof. Further analysis of the significance and function of this artifact is presented below.
- b. A “Model shrine” made of limestone. This artifact, 21 cm wide, 26 cm long and 35 cm high, was carved from a single block of soft limestone (Figs. 32–33; Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel 2012a: 153–158; Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2013; 2015; 2016). Traces of red paint are visible on the exterior. While the sides and back are simple, the façade is elegantly profiled. In the centre of the façade is a large rectangular doorframe, 10 cm wide and 20 cm high, formed by three recessed frames. Between the doorframe and the roof is a row of protruding rectangular elements, each divided by deep incisions into three narrow parallel rectangles. Four of these protruding elements are fully preserved and traces of three others are visible. This is the triglyph, a common element in classical architecture.

Figurines

Three cultic rooms and over 60 domestic rooms were uncovered in the Iron Age city; not a single anthropomorphic or zoomorphic figurine was uncovered in any of them. Only one anthropomorphic head made of clay was unearthed in Area A (Fig. 34; Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel 2012a: 164). Two similar heads have recently been uncovered in a 9th century BCE cultic context at Moza, near Jerusalem (Kisilewitz 2013).



Fig. 30: Clay shrine model from Rooms G and H in Building C10, after restoration.



Fig. 31: Close-up of the upper part of the clay shrine model from Building C10.



Fig. 32: Limestone shrine model from Room G in Building C10, after restoration. Above the entrance, roofing beams (triglyphs) are visible. The entrance is emphasized by three recessed doorframes. Remains of red paint are visible over the entire structure.



Fig. 33: Close-up of the triglyphs in the upper part of the limestone shrine model from Building C10.

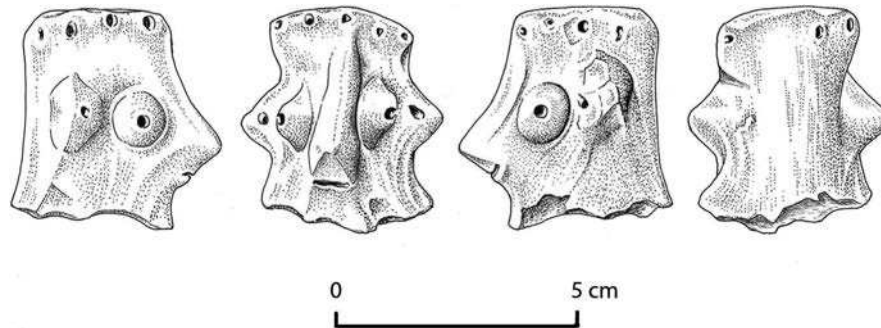


Fig. 34: Head of a clay figurine discovered in Area A in fills dated to the Iron Age IIA.

8. Writing

In the season of 2008 a large pottery sherd bearing an inscription was found on the floor of a building in Area B (Fig. 35). It was deciphered and published in the following year (Bearman and Christens-Barry 2009a, 2009b; Misgav, Garfinkel and Ganor 2009a, 2009b). Many studies have been devoted to it since then (Ahituv 2009; Yardeni 2009a, 2009b; Demsky 2009, 2012; Galil 2009; Shea 2009; Puech 2010; Becking and Sanders 2011; Lipiński 2011; Millard 2011; Rollston 2011; Achenbach 2012; Zilberg 2016). The ostrakon was written in ink and contained five lines, with a total of some seventy letters. The letters are written in an archaic style in the Canaanite writing tradition (also known as “Proto-Canaanite”). This is the longest inscription in this style ever found, and the longest extant inscription from the 12th to 9th centuries BCE in the region. It is also one of only a few inscriptions to be uncovered in clear stratigraphic context and its date, ca. 1000 BCE, is certain.

The second inscription was incised before firing from right to left on the shoulder of a pottery storage jar (Fig. 36). The letters are large and clear, similar in size and evenly spaced, written by a skilled hand in Canaanite script. A short, straight vertical line (a word divider) appears between each pair of words. The inscription includes a personal name: *'šb' l bn bd'* (Eshbaal son of Beda'). The name Beda' is unique, while Eshbaal is known from the Bible but has never yet appeared on an ancient inscription (Garfinkel *et al.* 2015).

The few first letters of the inscription are not fully preserved but, judging by the upper or lower edges that are still visible, the first word seems to have had four letters. In the context of an incised inscription on a large container, it seems that the first word implies that the jar's contents came from the field/estate of Eshbaal son of Beda'.



Fig. 35: Drawing of the Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon by Ada Yardeni.



Fig. 36: The 'Eshbaal son of Beda' inscription was incised on the storage jar before firing.

9. *Royal Architecture of the Iron Age Levant*

Probably the most important single artifact uncovered at Khirbet Qeiyafa is the unique limestone model shrine, the carved façade of which includes a combination of triglyphs and a recessed doorframe. This indicates that some aspects of the royal architecture typical of the Iron Age Levant, known archaeologically from the 9th–7th centuries BCE, developed 150 years earlier than previously thought.

Decoration of doorways with double- or triple-recessed doorframes is well known in the ancient Near East in elite architectural structures – mainly temples, but also palaces and tombs. This motif appeared as early as the 5th millennium BCE in the temple of Layer XIII at Tepe Gawra (Ubaid Culture), dated to ca. 4500 BCE. Many later examples are known from the 4th to the 1st millennium BCE (Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2013; 2015, 2016). This list includes well-known sites such as Tepe Gawra, Khafajah, Tell Asmar, Tell Brak, Ur, Mari, Alalakh, Tell Tayinat and Persepolis. In keeping with its significance, this type of frame was depicted on cylinder seals, plaques, schematic temples on Kudurru border stones, Hathor-headed capitals and dedicatory stelae and appears in an image of a god's throne, as well as on the temple plan on one of the statues of Gudea, king of Lagash. Windows were also decorated with recessed frames, as indicated by depictions on ivories and stone stelae.

The recessed opening is known in Mesopotamian architecture as early as 4500 BCE and in the Middle Bronze Age appeared in the palaces of Mari and Alalakh. Nevertheless, this architectural motif was not adopted by the local Canaanites and does not occur in any temple, palace or artistic expression in the Middle or Late Bronze Age of the southern Levant. Even in Ugarit, a flourishing Canaanite center in the northern Levant, recessed openings were not used.

In the late 9th and 8th centuries BCE there are various examples of recessed openings in the Levant. The well-known “woman in the window” motif has been found on ivories in royal palaces at Arslan Tash, Nimrud and Khorsabad in Mesopotamia and at Samaria, the capital of the Kingdom of Israel (Thureau-Dangin *et al.* 1931: Pls. XXXIV–XXXV; Crowfoot and Crowfoot 1938; Barnett 1975: 98–99, 145–151, Pl. IV). The woman is depicted within a windowframe that is triple-recessed at the top and sides. Recessed frames around window openings are also known from the Iron Age on a pottery cult stand from Yavneh (Kletter *et al.* 2010: Pl. 75,2–3) and from Cyprus (Washbourne 1999).

At Tell Tayinat two entrances were decorated with recessed doorframes (Haines 1971: Pls. 86, 100, 111). In royal tombs Nos. 5 and 12 at Tamassos, Cyprus, the stone façade of each burial chamber has recessed doorframes (Buchholz and Untiedt 1996; Walcher 2005). Tomb 5 includes a representation of wooden beams protruding below the roof. These resemble the triglyphs on the Khirbet Qeiyafa stone model, which are located in exactly the same position below the roof, albeit represented more schematically.

The earliest dated examples of Iron Age recessed openings were the ivories from Arslan Tash, a site destroyed in the late 9th century BCE. The other examples are commonly dated to the 8th century BCE. The Khirbet Qeiyafa limestone artifact is thus the earliest example of this type of royal architecture in the Levant, its radiometric dating to the late 11th to early 10th century BCE making it earlier than the other examples by 150–200 years.

Part II: Interpreting Qeiyafa in the Context of Modern Research

In order to understand the current heated debate on the interpretations of Khirbet Qeiyafa, one must consider the developments in the field of biblical archaeology and biblical history in the last 30 years or so. This is part of the ongoing debate regarding the historical data embedded in the Hebrew Bible. This debate can now be divided into three phases, and Khirbet Qeiyafa is at the focus of the second and the third of these.

1. Phase I. The Mythological Paradigm

In the mid-1980s, new approaches developed concerning the historicity of the biblical narrative. The main argument revolved around the date of the final writing of the Hebrew Bible. Particularly relevant to our discussion is the narrative of the 10th century BCE, the period known as the United Monarchy. The so-called “Minimalist” school claims that the Hebrew Bible was written in the Hellenistic period, nearly 700 years after the time of David and Solomon, and therefore that the description of that era is a purely literary composition (see, e.g., Van Seters 1983; Lemche 1988; Davies 1992; Thompson 1999).

In 1993 and 1994, several fragments of an Aramaic stele dated to the 9th century BCE were found at Tel Dan (Biran and Naveh 1995). This text specifically mentions a king of Israel and a king of the “House of David”, that is, a king of the dynasty of David. Reference to the “House of David” has consequently been identified on the Mesha Stele, also dated to the 9th century BCE (Lemaire 1994; Puech 1994). Thus, there are at least one, and possibly two, clear references to the dynasty of David in the 9th century BCE, only 100–120 years after his reign. This is clear evidence that David was indeed a historical figure and the founding father of a dynasty, contrary to the claims of the Minimalists.

The Tel Dan stele ended the first phase of the debate on the historicity of the Hebrew Bible, showing that the mythological paradigm was nothing but a modern myth.

2. *Phase II. The Low Chronology Paradigm*

After the collapse of the mythological paradigm, a new strategy was developed by the Minimalists. This time, the central method was to lower the dating of the transition between Iron Age I and Iron Age II from ca. 1000 BCE, as was accepted until then (commonly called the “high chronology”), to ca. 925 BCE (the “low chronology”) (Finkelstein 1996). A more extreme approach even lowers the transition to as late as ca. 900 BCE (the “ultra-low chronology”) (Sharon *et al.* 2007). The low chronology places urbanization only at the end of the 10th century BCE, thereby indicating that David and Solomon were not rulers of a kingdom but local tribal leaders.

In the last decade, hundreds of organic samples from Iron Age sites were sent for radiometric dating in order to verify or contradict the low chronology (see, e.g., Boaretto *et al.* 2005; Levy and Higham 2005; Sharon *et al.* 2007; Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2008). The advocates of the low chronology have declared without hesitation that the dating results of hundreds of samples support their chronology (Sharon *et al.* 2007). Conversely, the same dates were also presented as supporting the high chronology (Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2008). It is indeed quite bizarre to see that the same corpus of radiometric dates can be used to support both chronologies. It seems that the statistical results can be manipulated to support any position.

This situation has now changed completely, thanks to the recent excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa. The site cannot be dated any later than 970 BCE. The fortified city of Khirbet Qeiyafa indicates that the Iron Age IIA in the southern Levant began at the very end of the 11th century BCE, thus invalidating the low chronology paradigm.

3. *Phase III: The Ethnic Identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa*

Khirbet Qeiyafa is located on the border between Judah and the Philistine region and could, therefore, be associated with either of these. If it was a Judean site, then fortified cities were built in Judah and consequently David and Solomon were not shepherds living in tents. This situation supports the biblical tradition. Here begins the third phase in the evolution of the minimalist approach. The basic minimalist argument is very simple: even if David was a historical figure (given the Tel Dan stele), and even if the transition from Iron Age I to Iron Age II began at the end of the 11th century BCE (given the dating of Khirbet Qeiyafa), there was still no kingdom in Judah in the 10th century BCE. For this assumption to be true, Khirbet Qeiyafa must be a non-Judean site. Conversely, the identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa as a Judean city would indicate that David was indeed a substantial king who built fortified cities in strategic border locations. Thus, the first attempt of the Minimalists is to classify Khirbet Qeiyafa as a Philistine city, specifically as part of the kingdom of Gath, identified as Tell eš-Šafi, 12 km west of Khirbet Qeiyafa (Na’aman 2008a). Later, it was suggested that Khirbet Qeiyafa was a Canaanite site

(Na'aman 2010; Lederman and Bunimovitz 2014), a site of the Kingdom of Israel (Finkelstein 2013) or a site of a local, unknown entity (Lehmann and Niemann 2014).

The Khirbet Qeiyafa expedition did not take part in the long-standing Minimalist debate and has nothing to gain or lose if the site is identified as Judean or Philistine. As it seems now, the identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa as a Judean site is supported by various features, of which the main ones are as follows:

- a. *Urban planning.* The dwellings in Khirbet Qeiyafa adjoin and are incorporated in the city wall, with the casemate constituting the back room of every house. Such planning is evident at four additional sites: Beth-Shemesh, Tell en-Naṣbeh, Tell Beit Mirsim and Beersheba. These sites are all dated to the Iron Age II and located in the Kingdom of Judah (Shiloh 1978; Herzog 1997). On the other hand, small fortified field cities with casemate city walls are not known in Philistia or from the Canaanite culture, and this plan was not found in any city in the northern Kingdom of Israel.
- b. *Cooking habits.* No pig or dog bones were found at Khirbet Qeiyafa, while in Philistine sites these animals were part of the diet. At Khirbet Qeiyafa, a pottery baking tray was found in each of the buildings; such baking trays were not used at Philistine sites.
- c. *Administration.* About 700 impressed jar handles were uncovered at Khirbet Qeiyafa (Kang and Garfinkel 2015). This is a typically Judean administrative device. A similar system persisted in Judah for centuries, as attested by the *lmlk* impressed storage jars in the 8th century BCE (see, e.g., Garfinkel 1985; Ussishkin 2004), jars with rosette-impressed handles in the 7th century BCE (see, e.g., Cahill 1995), jars with various marking on their handles from the 6th century BCE (see, e.g., Pritchard 1960; Stern 1971), jars with *yhd* impressions in the 5th–4th centuries BCE (Lipschits and Vanderhooft 2011) and jars with five-pointed star impressions in the Hellenistic period (see, e.g., Ariel and Shoham 2000). Impressed jar handles are not found in meaningful quantities in the Kingdom of Israel.
- d. *Writing and language.* The language of the ostrakon uncovered at Khirbet Qeiyafa is clearly Semitic, and according to the epigraphist Haggai Misgav it is Hebrew. The short inscription known from Tell eṣ-Ṣafi contains Indo-European, not Semitic, names.

Today inscriptions in similar script are also known from Beth-Shemesh and Jerusalem (McCarter *et al.* 2011; Mazar *et al.* 2013). The geography of these inscriptions is very clear: they are located one day's walk from Jerusalem. In sites of the Kingdom of Israel, such as Tell el-Far'ah North, Megiddo, Beth-Shean and Rehov, not a single such inscription has been found.

- e. *Geopolitical location.* Khirbet Qeiyafa's location in the Elah Valley on the main road from the Philistine centers of Ashdod and Ashkelon to Jerusalem had no geopolitical importance for the Kingdom of Israel. In order to de-

- fend its supposed territory from Philistine attacks, the northern kingdom would have needed to build fortified cities in the Sorek and Ayalon Valleys.
- f. *Metal tools.* Most of the Iron Age metal artifacts at Khirbet Qeiyafa are made of iron, as at the Judean sites of Arad XII and Beersheba VII, while copper and bronze were still used in Canaanite sites (Gottlieb 2010: 100–104).
 - g. *Cult.* Canaanite sites of the Late Bronze Age and the Iron I have yielded a large number of anthropomorphic figurines, usually made from clay. Quite a large number of anthropomorphic female figurines were uncovered in strata dated to the 10th to 8th centuries BCE in sites belonging to the northern Kingdom of Israel. These figurines were made either by free modeling or by the use of a mold. They are reported from Samaria, Megiddo, Taanach, Jezreel, Beth-Shean and Rehov. Drummer figurines were found in a large number of sites in the Kingdom of Israel dated from the 10th to the 8th centuries BCE. Much information is available on the iconography of the Philistine culture in the Iron Age and detailed reports have appeared on the artistic assemblages from Tell Qasile, Ashkelon and Yavneh. A rich assemblage of female figurines can be seen, while male figurines are quite rare.

At Khirbet Qeiyafa nothing of the rich anthropomorphic iconography of Canaanite, Israelite or Philistine sites has been uncovered. The only figurine found is a large male head, a type now known from two other examples from Moza. The location of Khirbet Qeiyafa and Moza in Judah, and their early dating in the Iron Age IIA, fill a major gap in our chronological and geographical knowledge of the development of early religion in Judah.

Any scientific hypothesis should take into consideration all the available data that are relevant to that hypothesis. When assessing competing hypotheses, one must judge whether each of them indeed integrates all the relevant data in the discussion. The explanation that is able to integrate the largest amount of relevant data, or all of it, should be preferred to hypotheses that explain only some of the data.

In our case study, the analysis of the data indicates that the material culture of Khirbet Qeiyafa differed from that of other ethnic groups in the southern Levant: Canaanites, Philistines and the Kingdom of Israel. On the other hand, the data fit perfectly with the material culture of Judah, as known in the 9th and 8th centuries BCE. Based on this comparative analysis, it is clear that the only explanation that takes all the data into consideration is that Khirbet Qeiyafa was a Judean city.

4. *The Historical King David Kingdom of Judah*

Up to now I have presented, analyzed and discussed the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa and its main implications from the archaeological point of view. Now, the implications of the site for the early history of the Kingdom of Judah will be dis-

cussed. So far, nothing in the interpretation of the archaeological data has been influenced by the biblical text, and thus no circular arguments affect our understanding of either the archaeological data or the text.

The relationship between archaeology, history and the biblical text has been discussed on numerous occasions (see, e.g., Mazar 2007; Garfinkel 2012a). Obviously, when interpreting data from historical periods, we cannot overlook the historical dimension. Thus, the main question is not whether, but rather how, archaeology, history and the biblical text should be integrated. It is clear that each discipline should first be investigated separately through the sources and data, and that only at a second stage should they be integrated into one coherent picture. The main hazard in our specific case study, and in the field of biblical archaeology in general, is circular reasoning, whereby the first discipline is used to explain the second, after which the second discipline is used to support the first.

A kingdom is not an abstract entity but requires the control of a central authority over territory, population and resources. All of these are reflected in the finds from Khirbet Qeiyafa (Garfinkel 2011):

- a. *Control over territory.* The main threat to the new kingdom was the nearby developing Philistine city state of Gath (Tell eš-Šafi). In order to protect the border a Judean stronghold was built on the border and on the main road leading from the coastal plain into the hill country. In this way the city at Khirbet Qeiyafa protected both the border and the road.

The location of Khirbet Qeiyafa on the border, the very strong fortifications, the large amount of weapons and the fact that the site was destroyed shortly after it was built all point to a conflict area and an unstable political situation. The biblical traditions do indeed locate a large number of military clashes in this setting.

- b. *Control over population (administration).* The location of the site one day's walk from both Jerusalem and Hebron enabled efficient control of the population. The finds at Khirbet Qeiyafa attest to the existence of a central royal administration, in contrast to sites of the Iron Age I, which were small unfortified villages with no evidence for central administration. Administration in the ancient world was expressed mainly in economic obligations imposed on the population in two main forms: conscription of manpower for public works and collection of a certain percentage of the agricultural production as taxes. These two aspects find clear expression at Khirbet Qeiyafa. The conscription of manpower for public works is reflected in the massive construction at Khirbet Qeiyafa. The city's fortifications, including two gates and a casemate wall, attest to extensive construction, exceeding by far the modest building activity of Iron Age I villages and the capabilities of the local population, which I estimate to have been about one hundred families. Study of the distribution of stones in different parts of the site has shown that particularly large stones weighing 2–8 tons were found only

in the gates and the outer wall, while the rest of the stones in the wall and casemates were of medium size. Quarrying, transporting and building with the large stones would have required specialist artisans with engineering knowledge, who built according to an architect's plan that was prepared in advance. Strong men without specific skills would have sufficed for transporting and building with medium-sized stones, the main element in the city's fortifications. It seems that men were recruited to Khirbet Qeiyafa from all around the kingdom to work on construction of the city for several weeks, before being replaced by a new group.

- c. *Control over resources.* This was achieved by the second form of economic obligation: collection of a certain percentage of the agricultural production as taxes. Hundreds of storage jars with finger impressions on their handles were found at the site. Examination of the clay from which the storage jars were made has shown that they were centrally produced. The vessels were apparently delivered empty to the rural population and returned by them filled with agricultural produce. This system of taxation is convenient for the central administration, since it solves the problems of collection, transportation and storage. The marking of jars permitted control of the distribution and contents and prevented corruption.

The control over resources is clearly reflected by the pillar building uncovered in Area F. This was a central storage building for goods collected in the area around Khirbet Qeiyafa and later redistributed according to the needs of the central authority.

The question of when Judah became a full-scale kingdom has attracted much attention. In the early days of research, and up to today, the existence of a "United Monarchy" was accepted with little hesitation by various scholars (see, e.g., Yadin 1958; Malamat 1979; Halpern 1996; Stager 2003). In the 1980s and 1990s it was proposed that Judah became a kingdom only a few years before Sennacherib's campaign in 701 BCE (see, e.g., Jamieson-Drake 1991; Finkelstein 1999; Lehmann 2003). Today it is a commonly held opinion that Judah was able to spread into the Shephelah and beyond only after the destruction of the Philistine city of Gath, after ca. 830 BCE (see, e.g., Lehmann and Niemann 2014).

It is interesting to see that all these suggestions have one aspect in common: that Judah became a full-scale kingdom suddenly, whether in the 10th, the 9th or the 8th century BCE. The development of a kingdom, however, is a slow process that involves large-scale demographic and economic developments and complex social organization. These changes require time, and thus another model is needed, a model of slow development, with several stages from a small core to a full-scale kingdom (Garfinkel 2012b). This model is presented here in *Fig. 37*.

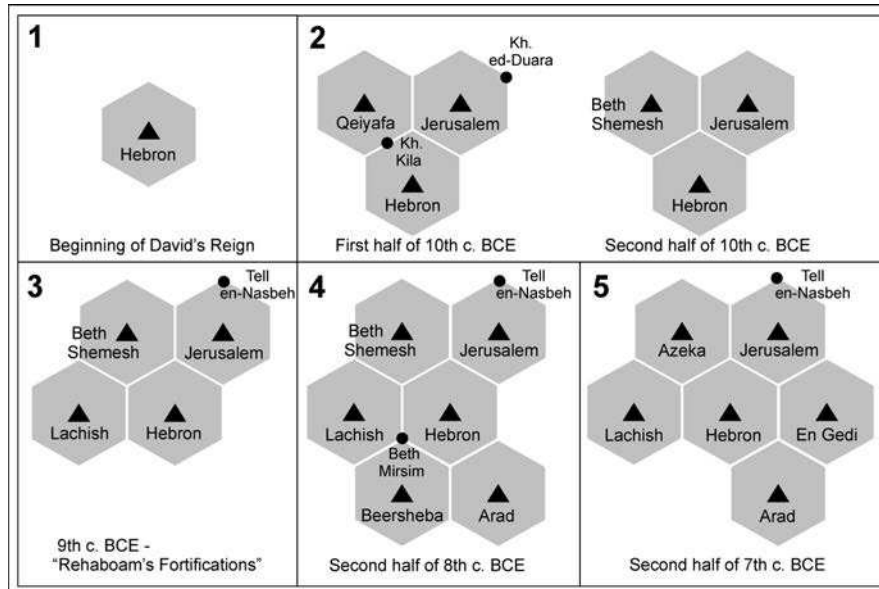


Fig. 37: The development of the settlement pattern and the main centers in the Kingdom of Judah, from its foundation until its final destruction (based on Garfinkel 2012b).

Part III: Qeiyafa and the Biblical Tradition

The debate about the relationship between archaeology, ancient Near Eastern studies and the Bible, which seems so modern today, actually began over a century ago. In 1902 the famous “Babel und Bibel” lecture delivered by the German Semitic philologist Friedrich Delitzsch generated much public interest (Arnold and Weisberg 2002). From the very beginning of systematic archaeological and historical research on the ancient Near East there was a complex love-hate relationship between archaeology and the Bible.

The extensive attack on the connection between the biblical tradition and archaeology is indeed justified when circular reasoning is used. In such cases the Bible is used to interpret the archaeological data and then the archaeological data confirm the biblical tradition. But today it is very common to throw out the baby with the bathwater. This is part of much larger wider intellectual developments formulated in the West during the last decades of the 20th century. Today we are in a postmodern and deconstructive era. Everything is relative, there is no right or wrong and contradictory approaches are all legitimate. Good scholarship, however, should be aware of the current trends and not get carried away by popular, but unsound, approaches.

In the following, the central question regarding Khirbet Qeiyafa is its relationship with the biblical sources, which describe state-formation processes in Judah and King David's activities and intensive military clashes against the Philistine city of Gath in the Elah Valley. In our opinion, these biblical traditions are contemporaneous with the settlement of the fortified city at Khirbet Qeiyafa. Thus, our excavations have direct implications for these complex matters.

1. *The Ancient Name*

The question of the ancient name of Khirbet Qeiyafa has attracted much attention (Adams 2009). Various toponyms have been suggested over the years: 'Adatim (Dagan 1996: 139), Gob (Na'aman 2008a), Shaaraim (Garfinkel and Ganor 2008c), Neṭa'im (Galil 2009: 223) and Ma'gal (Levin 2012). At present, it seems that the identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa with Shaaraim is the best available possibility. The names Gob, Neṭa'im and Ma'gal are not associated with any biblical list of settlements. Indeed, in his comprehensive study of the historical geography of the Bible, Aharoni (1987: 331–334) did not include any of them among the biblical cities.

The name Shaaraim, Hebrew *sha'arayim*, "two gates" appears three times in the biblical tradition (Joshua 15:36; 1 Samuel 17:52; 1 Chronicles 4:31). Based on the chronology, the geography and the meaning of the name, the similarities between Khirbet Qeiyafa and biblical Shaaraim are very clear (*Table 5*). In ancient toponyms a city with only one gate may be called *sha'arayim* (Na'aman 2008b); this name is even more suitable for a city with two gates.

	<i>Location</i>	<i>Chronology</i>	<i>Meaning of name</i>
<i>Biblical Shaaraim</i>	Vicinity of the Elah Valley	Time of David	Two gates
<i>Khirbet Qeiyafa</i>	Adjoining the Elah Valley	ca. 1020–980 BCE	Two gates at the site

Table 5: Comparison of the biblical data on the city of Shaaraim with the archaeological findings.

2. *The Elah Valley as a border area between Judah and Philistine Gath*

Khirbet Qeiyafa had a very prominent location at the entrance to the Kingdom of Judah. In this location it controlled the road leading to Jerusalem. The new city was a statement of a new regime and a new power in the area. It is now clear why the biblical tradition placed the David-Goliath story in this location and time. By the end of the 9th century BCE Gath had been destroyed and the Valley of Elah had lost its geopolitical importance.

3. *The Model Shrine and Solomon's Palace and Temple*

The unique stone model shrine from Khirbet Qeiyafa contributes new data on royal architecture in Judah in the first half of the 10th century BCE. The triglyph motifs and recessed doorframe on its façade show that aspects typical of royal architecture in the Iron Age Levant, previously known archaeologically from the 9th–7th centuries BCE, developed 150 years earlier than previously thought. In recent studies of this artifact it was shown that triglyphs and a recessed doorframe also appear in the biblical description of King Solomon's palace and temple in Jerusalem (Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2013, 2015).

The biblical account attributes large-scale public construction, including royal palaces and a temple in Jerusalem, to King Solomon. The historicity of these traditions has been extensively debated by modern scholars (see, e.g., Miller 1997; Van Seters 1997; Hurowitz 2010: 281–282; Edelman 2012; Galil 2012). The most valuable tool of the historian in assessing historical sources is the juxtaposition of different testimonies to the same event. Luckily, we have such data here. On the one hand, the Khirbet Qeiyafa artifact was buried in the early 10th century BCE and remained so until today. On the other hand, the biblical traditions describe the same type of royal architecture in the palace and temple, which are attributed to the mid-10th century BCE. There is no circular reasoning here; the triglyphs and recessed doorframe were identified on the model shrine thanks to our knowledge of such architectural elements in various other buildings, while the artifact was dated by radiometric means.

The model shrine uncovered at Khirbet Qeiyafa shows that an elaborate Iron Age architectural style had already developed by the 10th century BCE. Such construction is typical of royal enterprise, suggesting that state formation, the establishment of a social elite and urbanism existed in the region in the days of David and Solomon.

We do not know when the biblical texts describing the period of David and Solomon were composed. The stone model shrine from Khirbet Qeiyafa attests that the text describes architectural elements that were actually known in that region and during that period, thus supporting the historicity of this particular biblical tradition. This suggests that the ruling elite in Judah displayed its power through the use of prestige artifacts and the construction of elaborate architecture as early as the 10th century BCE.

Concluding Remarks

The location of Khirbet Qeiyafa and the data uncovered clearly demonstrate that it was a Judean city rather than a Canaanite or Philistine one. Nor did it belong to the northern Kingdom of Israel. The new data and the radiometric dating support the biblical narrative about state formation in Judah. The archaeological data and the biblical text both indicate that a new social organization developed in Judah in the late 11th century BCE. There is no circular rea-

soning here, as the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa is dated radiometrically and its ethnic identification is based on the archaeological data. On the other hand, in the biblical tradition this period is the era of King David. This narrative, like any historical narrative, suffers from various shortcomings but can no longer be rejected out of hand. In the late 11th century BCE a small kingdom, the Kingdom of Judah, began to develop in the hills of Jerusalem and Hebron. Its founding father was David. The main scientific challenge is not to overlook this political entity, but to investigate it, in order to achieve better understanding of its formation and development over time.

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Khirbet Qeiyafa in its Regional Context: A View From Philistine Gath

Aren M. MAEIR

In light of the excavations and publications of the finds from the two neighboring sites of Tell eš-Šafi/Gath and Khirbet Qeiyafa, I present an assessment of the suggested interpretations of the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa in its broader regional context, and discuss the relationship between the two sites during the early Iron Age.

Introduction

The excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa, directed by Yossi Garfinkel and his colleagues, with the fascinating finds and their very commendable prompt and comprehensive publication (e.g. Garfinkel and Ganor 2009; Garfinkel *et al.* 2014), have added much to what we know about the early Iron Age in the Southern Levant. Already from the initial reports on the finds from the site and their interpretation, Khirbet Qeiyafa has been at the center of some of the most vigorous and lively debates among scholars of the Iron Age Levant. Just about every possible opinion on this has been brought forward – ranging from full acceptance of the excavators' suggestions, through partial acceptance of the suggested ramifications, and to complete denial of any connection between the finds and the early Judahite Kingdom. Without a doubt, if one just would read the studies relating to Khirbet Qeiyafa and its finds – many hours of library work would be needed! In my opinion, whatever one's stance regarding the interpretation of the site – one has to profusely thank Yossi Garfinkel for serving as the “engine” behind all this research activity!¹

In this paper, I would like to discuss the significance and regional context of the finds from Khirbet Qeiyafa from the perspective of the excavations at nearby Philistine Gath (Tell eš-Šafi/Gath), which I believe was the major polity in the southern Land of Israel at the time. I will utilize this as an opportunity to suggest an interpretation of the broader context of the finds at Khirbet Qeiyafa, and in particular, their significance for reconstructing the cultural and political history of the Southern Levant during the late Iron Age I and early Iron Age II.

¹ As the director of the Tell eš-Šafi/Gath Archaeological Project, and as one of the close archaeological “neighbors” to the excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa (and of Yossi Garfinkel's new excavations at Lachish as well), I am particularly happy that I have been given the opportunity to discuss the significance of the finds from Khirbet Qeiyafa in relation to the finds at Tell eš-Šafi/Gath. This paper is updated as of August, 2015.

Judahite – Israelite – Canaanite: The Debate on the Identity of the Population of Khirbet Qeiyafa

The unique nature of the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa is apparent. The clear evidence of fortifications at the site (including a well-planned casemate wall, and according to the excavators, two classical Iron Age chambered gates), epigraphic and cultic finds, are on their own quite unique, but if one adds to this the short-lived nature of the main architectural features and their dating (late 11th/early 10th centuries BCE), the cultural affiliation as suggested by the excavators (Judahite), and their belief that the finds of the site can be associated with the incipient Kingdom of Judah (in the time of David), both the finds, and their interpretation by the excavators, are quite extraordinary. Needless to say, the excavators' claims have not been accepted by all.

To start with, I must state that I accept the excavators' suggestion that the site is Judahite – if only for the lack of a better-fitting solution. The material culture does show clear connections with early Iron Age Jerusalem – even if little is known about Jerusalem at this stage (see, e.g. Cahill 2003; Cahill West 2008). The well-known inscription (Misgav *et al.* 2009), while one cannot say with total confidence that it can *only* be Judahite (e.g. Rollston 2011) – nevertheless may very likely be so. The various elements which the excavators connect to Judahite material traditions (pottery, architecture, cult, etc. – e.g. Garfinkel *et al.* 2014) – do in fact fit in nicely with what we know of late Iron I and early Iron IIA Judah.

Suggestions of an early Israelite connection (e.g. Kingdom of Saul – suggested by Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012) in my opinion are hard to accept. This is so both for the general lack of clear evidence of the Kingdom of Saul, which is a separate issue beyond the scope of the present study, but also the lack of any specific material finds at Khirbet Qeiyafa that enable this interpretation. The lack of pig bones at Khirbet Qeiyafa, which the excavators have suggested can help in determining the Judahite identity of the site (e.g. Garfinkel *et al.* 2014; or to the Canaanite – see below), may perhaps be relevant for raising additional problems with the suggested connection with the early Israelite Kingdom. As Sapir-Hen *et al.* (2013) have demonstrated, from the Iron IIA onwards, in Israelite sites there is a rise in pig consumption, while in Judahite sites, for the most part, abstention from pork continues. This being the case, if in fact Khirbet Qeiyafa should be dated to the transition between the Iron I to the Iron IIA, then perhaps the lack of pig bones might indicate that a southern, Judahite orientation is more likely.

Suggestions to see Khirbet Qeiyafa as a Canaanite site – and connected to a supposed Canaanite “enclave” in the Shephelah, between the Philistines and the Israelites (which has become a very popular explanation in recent years ...) – is a possibility, but I don't see definitive evidence of this. Recently, it has been repeatedly suggested that not only can the Philistine and Israelite/Judahite ethnicities be clearly identified archaeologically, an additional, “Canaanite”

group can be seen in the archaeological record, in the Shephelah buffer zone between the Philistines and Israelites. This has been suggested for the early Iron Age phases at sites such as Beth-Shemesh, Tel Eton and Khirbet Qeiyafa.

Perhaps the most sophisticated of these interpretations has been developed by Bunimovitz and Lederman (2011; Lederman and Bunimovitz 2014), who focus on practices of resistance of the local population in Tel Beth-Shemesh. Accordingly, at the time of the arrival of migrant communities, people at Tel Beth-Shemesh stopped consuming pork and also did not acquire pottery, which they associated with the newcomers. This brings us very close to the emic identification of otherness without falling into the necessity to equate the “others” with a homogenous “ethnic group”. What might have been perceived as a homogenous other by the inhabitants of Tel Beth-Shemesh could have been in fact a very heterogeneous group of migrants and parts of the material culture and social practices of these newcomers were then perceived as being characteristic for all of them by the inhabitants of Tel Beth-Shemesh. This raises the question of who identifies whom as a coherent social group - and that there is even no single “emic” perspective - but competing identifications of the other (and, finally, also oneself) as a group with a joint identity. It should be noted though that the most recent finds at Tel Beth-Shemesh (summer 2015) so far reported only informally, may question this “tight” interpretation, as it appears that in the excavation of early Iron Age contexts a significant amount of Philistine pottery was found, perhaps supporting the possibility that there was a Philistine presence on site.

As opposed to what appears to be a tight, site-specific interpretation which may “hold water”, attempts to formulate an overall definition of ethnic groups living in very clearly defined and bordered regions appear to be hard to justify (e.g. Faust and Katz 2011; Faust 2013). It should be stressed that the very definition of “who is” and “who is not” a Philistine or an Israelite/Judahite is hardly agreed upon. And thus, suggesting to explicitly define the supposedly static ethnic identity of a group living in the contact zone between these groups is fraught with difficulty. The very fact that “Canaanite” (local Levantine) features are seen in Iron Age Philistia and at the same time, a major part of the so-called “early Israelite” culture can be traced to local Levantine (“Canaanite”) origins, makes it difficult to distinguish between a “real” Canaanite – supposedly living in this buffer zone, and a “transformed” Canaanite – who lives in the Philistine and/or Israelite/Judahite regions.

In addition, the suggestion that a Canaanite “entity” existed betwixt the Philistines and the Israelites, may very well be influenced by a modern reading of the biblical text – in particular the mention of Canaanites in this region in the “Tamar and Judah narrative” in Genesis 38 – as there is no clear corroboration of this in contemporaneous Iron Age texts. As very few biblical scholars would date this text to the early Iron Age (e.g. Leuchter 2013), one wonders whether this text in fact reflects a historical reality at all. Can we speak of a

Canaanite group identity in this region during the early Iron Age, and even if so – how can this be identified archaeologically?

Perhaps then, one should prefer to look at the transition between the Philistia-Shephelah-Central Hills, as a region in which boundaries did exist, but they were “fuzzy” and constantly changing. While there is no question that during the early Iron Age there were peoples that identified themselves separately – perhaps as “Philistines” (and they resided mainly in Philistia) and as Israelites/Judahites (and they resided mainly in the Central Hills) – and for the arguments sake – perhaps even “Canaanites” (residing in the Shephelah), it would be very hard to define, at any given time, based on the available archaeological data, the cultural/ethnic affiliation, and more than that – the exclusive group identity – of the inhabitants of a given site in the border zones. Thus, simplistic interpretations of the archaeological correlates for identifying “ethnic” Philistines as opposed to other groups in the Iron Age Levant warrant caution. Similarly, attempts to identify a unified “Philistine identity” may be problematic as well. Not only are the Philistines of a very mixed origin (various foreign components “mixed” in with local ones), as noted above, there are discreet regional differences between the material culture at various Philistine sites. Add to this the fact that the Philistines themselves, as far as we know from the available epigraphic materials from Philistia, defined themselves based on their cities or origins – and not necessarily as “Philistines” in general.

Yehuda Dagan, who conducted extensive surveys (and some excavations) in this region (e.g., Dagan 2010; 2011), has questioned the very dating of the remains from the site. Dagan’s views (2009) are simply unacceptable, since telltale remains that are picked up in survey, even if of various periods, cannot override the results of extensive excavations. Thus, even if Dagan found sherds from many periods, the excavations have clearly and definitively shown that the primary architectural features at the site date to a relatively short time frame.

Lily Singer-Avitz (e.g. 2010; 2012) and Israel Finkelstein and Eli Piasetzky (e.g. 2010; see as well Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012) have challenged the dating proposed by Garfinkel *et al.* While the latter would date the site to ca. 1025–975 BCE, and see it as representing an early Iron Age IIA pottery horizon, Singer-Avitz believes that the pottery is more likely to be late Iron Age I, while Finkelstein and Piasetzky believe that the radiocarbon dates that have been published so far from the excavation do not enable such a close dating; they believe that as of yet, the dates can be set only as somewhere between ca. 1050 BCE and no later than 915 BCE – similar, in their opinion, to the dating of various late Iron Age I sites in the Levant. While clearly these views have relevance for understanding the exact role of this site, I believe that by and large, they do not change much in the importance, and character, of the site. Even if one argues that the material culture from the site should be classified as late Iron Age I and not early Iron Age IIA, the character of the site (fortified and of relatively short duration) and its cultural affiliation (not Philis-

tine/coastal), argue quite clearly that the founding and construction of this site should be related to a polity that existed to the east of Philistia. Whether this is a polity that derives from the Central Hills (i.e., the early Judahite and/or Israelite kingdoms) or if from an as-yet unidentified polity that existed in the Judean Shephelah at the time (e.g. Lederman and Bunimovitz 2014), the evidence at present is not sufficiently definitive; I, personally, as mentioned above, prefer in this case, an “Occam’s Razor” approach – and opt for the possibility that it is related to the incipient polities in the Central Hills – what later will be known as the Israelite, and then Judahite kingdom.

Nadav Na’aman (2008a; 2008b)² originally questioned the cultural affiliation of the site, believing that it is not to be seen as Israelite, but rather as Philistine, and in fact, sees it as a satellite site of the Philistine kingdom of Gath (do note that he has more recently opted for a Canaanite identity for the site). This though can hardly be accepted. The stark differences between the pottery from Khirbet Qeiyafa and that of both late Iron Age I and early Iron Age IIA Tell eṣ-Ṣafi/Gath can hardly justify a claim that these two sites are closely affiliated. Initial evidence of the palaeodiet, even if one should relate to this issue with caution (e.g., Sapir-Hen *et al.* 2013; Maeir and Horwitz 2015), as well as other aspects, only strengthens this claim. If at all, the rather strong similarity to the partially published late Iron Age I/early Iron Age IIA pottery from Jerusalem, strengthens a claims for an inland affiliation of this site.

It should be stressed that despite the clear differences between the finds at Khirbet Qeiyafa and Tell eṣ-Ṣafi/Gath, it would be rash to claim that one can define a clear border between these two sites, with Khirbet Qeiyafa representing the westernmost position of an inland polity and culture. Dagan (2010: 195–201) recently published a late Iron Age I/early Iron Age IIA tomb that was discovered ca. 4 km to the northeast of Khirbet Qeiyafa, further within the hilly region of the eastern “High Shephelah.” The tomb appears to have quite a few “Philistine” type vessels, and in fact it is quite similar to the pottery found at Tell eṣ-Ṣafi/Gath, seemingly somewhat different from the assemblage at Khirbet Qeiyafa. This being the case, it would appear that the users of the tomb may have been affiliated with the Philistine culture, and perhaps with the Philistine polity of Gath to the west, rather than to the occupants of Khirbet Qeiyafa – despite the fact that the tomb is located further inland. This can perhaps be seen as indicating that the cultural borders in this region were quite fluid – and perhaps, one should not talk of distinct cultural and/or political boundaries during this period between the coastal plain and Philistia and the inland (Judahite/Israelite?) regions.

This latter suggestion should not come as a surprise, both in light of what is known of the shifting character of border zones between cultural units, and, at the same time, the biblical description of the fluidity of the relationship be-

² Note that he later changed his mind on this issue, and now believes the site is Canaanite in nature (e.g. Na’aman 2010).

tween, and the definition of, the peoples living with the Philistine and the Israelite/Judahite spheres of influence (for an extended discussion of this issue, see Maeir and Hitchcock in press).

The Relationship between Tell eš-Šafi/Gath and Khirbet Qeiyafa

But what can the finds at Tell eš-Šafi/Gath tell us about the relationship between Gath and Khirbet Qeiyafa? In addition to the fact that the material cultures at these two sites are quite different, I believe that the status of Gath throughout the Iron I and Iron IIA can help us understand the role, function and status of Khirbet Qeiyafa during the brief time of its existence during the Iron Age. As we know now (that is including the 2014 season of excavations), Gath was a large Philistine site from the very beginning of the Iron Age (ca. early 12th century BCE) up until the late 9th century BCE – when Hazael destroyed the site (e.g. Maeir 2012; 2013; 2016). In fact, during the late Iron I and early Iron IIA, it appears that Gath was of a particularly large size, ca. 45 to 50 hectares – including an expansive lower city. In addition, throughout the Iron I and early Iron IIA (until the Hazael destruction), the site continued to flourish without any evidence of destructions and or change in cultural and/or political orientations. Thus, it can be safe to assume that the city of Gath served as the primary polity in this region, particularly during the late Iron I and early Iron IIA (e.g. late 11th through late 9th century BCE).

This being the case, the existence of this polity would limit the possibilities of a westward expansion of the incipient Judahite polity on the one hand – and of a southern expansion of a northern early Israelite polity (in light of Finkelstein and Fantalkin's [2012] suggestion mentioned above). Attempts to “explain away” the importance of Gath at this stage and see it as an anomaly – which existed in a “bubble” while the early Judahite Kingdom expanded into the Shephelah unhindered (as Faust 2014 and Ussishkin 2014 seem to believe) – is rather hard to accept. It is now clear that the site was fortified at this stage, as seen both on the upper tell and in the lower city,³ to which can be added its large size (ca. 50 hectares), lack of destructions, and evidence of inter- and intra-regional connections, does not enable one to suggest that this was a site which had not political “clout” – and the city of Gath was not the center of the largest kingdom in the region with a strong influence on neighboring polities and cultures – and their ability to expand into the regions under the control of the Kingdom of Gath.

In this light, as argued in the past (e.g. Maeir 2012), I believe that the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa was a short lived attempt of the Judahite polity to extend its influence to the west, but that this attempt was ephemeral and was quickly

³ In particular, the results of the 2015 season have demonstrated the existence of impressive fortifications in the upper and lower city during the Iron Age IIA. Thus, Ussishkin's (2014) claim to the contrary can be disregarded.

crushed by the Kingdom of Gath. This would explain why Khirbet Qeiyafa is destroyed after a short period – and does not serve as a “base” for the further expansion of the Judahite influence in this area. When Judah does expand into the Shephelah, whether before or after the conquest of Gath by Hazael,⁴ the focus of this expansion is at other sites, such as Lachish. In any case, even if Judah did expand in the Shephelah prior to the late 9th century BCE, this would have only been towards the southwestern Shephelah (the regions south of Lachish).

Final remarks

I would also like to address several other points that Yossi Garfinkel has suggested regarding Khirbet Qeiyafa:

1. The suggestion to identify the site as Shaaraim (Hebrew *sha'arayim*) – although technically a possibility – cannot be accepted *per se*. The fact that the site has two gates does not prove this point – both due to the fact that the “ayim” ending does not necessarily indicate ‘double’ (as already pointed out by others), as well as the fact that the original claim that only this site has two gates has now been disproven by Garfinkel himself at Lachish!
2. Garfinkel’s suggestion (e.g. Garfinkel *et al.* 2012) to see the early Judahite kingdom as being based at three sites during the time of David – Jerusalem, Qeiyafa and Hebron – is hard to accept. First of all, it is hard to see why a site which is on the very western periphery of the Judahite polity would be chosen as a central site. In addition, as discussed above, it is destroyed after a very short period. And most importantly, from all the excavations that have been conducted in ancient Hebron (Tell Rumeideh; e.g., Eisenberg and Nagorski 2002; Chadwick 2005), there is so far no evidence of a substantial late Iron I/early Iron IIA presence on this site – let alone an indication that it was one of the major sites of the Judahite polity! So besides Jerusalem – and even there the remains at this stage are not that impressive (see Cahill 2003) – there is virtually no evidence for this three-pronged urban settlement pattern that has been suggested.
3. Likewise, I don’t agree with Yossi Garfinkel’s suggestions regarding the understanding of the biblical text – and the methodologies currently employed to analyze it – in light of the excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa. Due to the fact that he believes that evidence for the Kingdom of David has been found at the site, he questions much of the currently accepted methods and interpretations of modern biblical research. Without going into too much detail, this is very problematic. On the one hand, as noted above, the ar-

⁴ See e.g., Faust 2014 who argues for an earlier date, as opposed, e.g., to Koch 2012; Sergi 2013; Lehmann and Niemann 2014, who argue for a later date of the Judahite incursion into the Shephelah.

chaeological interpretation of the site in a simplistic and straightforward manner in relationship to the biblical text is hard to accept. And no less important – the tools and methods of modern biblical scholarship are not something that can be brushed aside based on this or that find – from this or that site! The complex nature of the biblical texts – and for sure those dealing with the “Davidic cycle” – cannot be collapsed into a monolithic, “Sunday School” understanding of early biblical history! This would seem to be completely obvious – and one can only state quite simply that the very evidence from Khirbet Qeiyafa does not support this view! For if we accept a monolithic understanding of the David story – one would assume that the Israelites defeated the Philistines after the David and Goliath confrontation – and the Philistines barely escaped from the field! If this was in fact what happened in reality, one would expect that Khirbet Qeiyafa, as one of the three major sites of the Davidic Kingdom would continue to exist throughout David’s rule and his control over Philistia would be manifested at sites in Philistia (as the biblical text would lead us to believe). But in fact, the very finds from Khirbet Qeiyafa indicate that the picture is very different. Even if one accepts this site as being Judahite (which I believe is the case), the story of the site’s existence and role hardly fits in with a “simplistic” reading of the biblical text.

To summarize, while I am in awe at the finds that Yossi Garfinkel and his colleagues have discovered at the site, am very impressed with the swift and comprehensive publications, and agree in part with some of the suggested interpretations by Garfinkel and his team (in particular that the site is most likely Judahite), other aspects of the interpretive framework which they have suggested – and in particular what it can tell us about the early Judahite Kingdom and the supposed veracity of the biblical texts about this stage in Judahite history – I find hard to accept.

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Khirbet Qeiyafa – Some Thoughts of a Biblical Scholar. Response to Yosef Garfinkel and Aren Maeir

Thomas RÖMER

The article challenges the identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa with Shaaraim, mentioned only three times (or even less) in the Hebrew Bible. It also questions Garfinkel's idea that the place should be related directly to King David. The absence of iconic material and pig bones cannot be used to claim a Judahite character of the site.

Introduction: Biblical Scholarship and Archaeology

Everybody will agree that the results of the excavation of Khirbet Qeiyafa have produced enormously interesting and intriguing discoveries and these finds certainly belong to the most important contributions to the archeology of Iron Age Israel/Palestine in recent years. During the last three years, I had the chance to visit the site three times and it is indeed, also for the non-archaeologist, a very impressive site.

Reading and listening to both presentations and taking into account also the numerous publications related to Khirbet Qeiyafa (Garfinkel 2009 and 2015, Na'aman 2010, Pioske 2015), the site as well as the finds, provide some comfort for the biblical scholar because the opinions and interpretations are as various as the results of exegetical research.

Some of my colleagues still are of the opinion that archeology can give a definite answer to unresolved questions of biblical scholarship, but to understand and to interpret finds of an excavation also necessitates a theoretical framework that should be open to revision as should be theories of biblical scholarship. This does, however, not mean that I am advocating a postmodern position according to which "anything goes".

In his article Yosef Garfinkel speaks of a "complex love-hate relationship between archaeology and the Bible" (Garfinkel, *supra* page 47). It is true that the so-called "Biblical Archaeology" was often used in order to prove the "veracity" of the biblical texts as well as their historicity, especially in conservative Christian and Jewish milieux (see for instance Keller 2009¹). I do not want to discuss here the role of "Biblical Archeology" in the context of the foundation of the state of Israel and the role of archeology in providing the feeling of a historical continuity between the young state and the time of the Patriarchs or

¹ This book – published for the first time in 1955 – was edited anew several times and translated into twenty languages.

the time of David (see on this Smyth-Florentin 1993). It is however obvious that the claim of archeologists to have discovered remains of the Davidic palace in Jerusalem or a Davidic administrative center in Khirbet Qeiyafa always makes it to the headlines of newspapers and into other media.

The relationship between archeology and Biblical Studies was indeed never an easy one. After having been considered by biblical scholars as a “Hilfswissenschaft”, archeologists working in the “the Holy Land” wanted to emancipate and did not much care about the results of critical biblical research. Sometimes archeologists also had the idea that archeology could definitely settle issues of dating and understanding biblical texts, so that the question arose whether archeology could really be the “High Court” of biblical and historical scholarship (Na’aman 2011). In my view, both disciplines should work autonomously but also in interaction or to put it with Garfinkel, “archeology, history and the biblical text should be integrated” (Garfinkel, *supra* page 45), and that we should avoid circular reasoning. With my colleague Israel Finkelstein, whom I do not consider a “minimalist” (see Garfinkel, *supra* page 42), I have recently tried to investigate from an archaeological and Biblical Studies viewpoint the formation and possible dating of the Abraham- and Jacob narratives, not in order to prove or to deny the historicity of the Patriarchs, but to see when certain locations make sense and when not or less, and then to combine these results with recent theories about the formation of Genesis 12–36 (Finkelstein and Römer 2014a and 2014b). I found this collaboration stimulating and helpful and would like to see a similar approach also to the many “riddles” of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

Let me first comment on some more general issues before turning to questions related to biblical scholarship.

The Question of Date and Ethnicity

According to Garfinkel, “it is clear that the city came to an end before 970 BCE” (Garfinkel, *supra* page 30) whereas Aren Maeir reminds us that this view has been challenged by Singer-Avitz (2010 and 2012) and Finkelstein and Piasezky (2010), firstly because of the pottery of the site, and secondly because of the radiocarbon dates, which would as of yet only permit a dating of the Iron Age occupation somewhere between 1050 BCE and 915 BCE. I agree with Maeir that these different proposals of dating “do not change much in the importance, and character, of the site” (Maeir, *supra* page 64, see also Lemaire 2015: 18). But maybe there is some impact for the understanding of the history of the site whether one puts the date of its abandonment or destruction around 970 BCE or 915 BCE. A date by 915 would put the end of Iron Age Khirbet Qeiyafa after Solomon,² whereas 970 corresponds to the traditional date of the

² Whose death is traditionally dated around 930 BCE.

end of King David's rule. Is this only by chance that this date is suggested by Garfinkel?

One should, however, remember that the length of 40 years which the biblical authors attribute to the reigns of both, David and Solomon, certainly reflect the fact that they were unsure about the real dates so that they invented for both a symbolic number. It is therefore possible that the duration of their respective reigns was indeed a much shorter one (Finkelstein and Silberman 2006: 19–20). This observation makes it already complicated to date the existence and the end of Khirbet Qeiyafa precisely under one of the first Israelite or Judahite kings.

A similar difficulty arises in regard to the question of the ethnicity of the population of Khirbet Qeiyafa. In the current discussion three or even four options are discussed. The site was a Judahite fortress and part of the Davidic kingdom (the majority's opinion), or it belonged to the Saulide kingdom (Finkelstein 2013: 54–59), or it was a Philistine site (Na'aman 2008), or it belonged to a "Canaanite" as-yet unidentified political identity (Na'aman 2010; Koch 2012). Yosef Garfinkel and Aren Maeir opt – with different degrees of certainty – for the Judahite identity of the site. However, Maeir rightly points out "that the cultural borders in this region were quite fluid and [that] perhaps, one should not talk of distinct cultural and/or political boundaries during this period between the coastal plain and Philistia and the inland ... regions" (Maeir, *supra* page 65). Indeed, the biblical stories in the books of Samuel depict a Philistine domination of the Shephelah and present David in some stories as a vassal or a warlord in Philistine service. One may also ask whether the application of our concepts of ethnicity and identity applied to the Levant of the 2nd or 1st millennium BCE is not somewhat anachronistic. People living in a certain area identified themselves probably more with a certain clan or tribe than with a larger political entity, and people living in a certain territory could probably come under rules of different kingdoms without being much aware of that. This is evidenced by the Mesha inscription, where people living north-east of the Dead Sea were sometimes under Israelite and sometimes under Moabite rule. Did they consider themselves as Moabites or Israelites? Hard to say.

I would like to add that the traditional opposition between "Canaanites" and "Judahites" or "Israelites" should also be handled with much caution. As shown by Othmar Keel and others (Keel 2002; Staubli 2011), in many biblical texts the opposition between Canaan and Israel is an ideological one, and was mainly set up in order to denigrate veneration of gods other than YHWH or certain religious customs as "Canaanite" in a context of religious innovations during the 7th or 6th centuries BCE that prepare the new religion that will be called later "Judaism". One should therefore define precisely in what sense one uses the term "Canaanite".

Yosef Garfinkel indicates some ethnic markers that according to him prove the Judahite character of the site, like the absence of pig bones or the absence

of anthropomorphic or zoomorphic figurines (Garfinkel, *supra* page 35). Does this mean that he thinks that the Decalogue existed already in the 10th century BCE? There is much evidence for “iconism” in Israel and Judah, figurines, seals etc., as shown by Silvia Schroer, Christoph Uehlinger and others (Schroer 1987; Sass and Uehlinger 1993; Niehr 1993; Uehlinger 1996), so that the absence of such material cannot prove much in my view. The case of the pig bones is interesting and complex. There is indeed a striking difference between Khirbet Qeiyafa and Tell eš-Šafi. But does this mean the inhabitants of Khirbet Qeiyafa respected already the kashrut? According to a rare consensus in North American and European critical scholarship the two texts of Deut 14 and Lev 11 (one text probably depends on the other, or they share both a common *Vorlage*) date at earliest from the 7th or 6th century (Nihan 2007: 283–299). According to recent articles by Lidar Sapir-Hen *et al.* (2013 and 2015), it seems indeed that there is a difference between pig husbandry in Iron Age Israel and Judah. Contrary to Judah, pigs were apparently quite popular in cities of Israel; however they only appear sparsely or not at all in non-urban settlements even in the presumed Philistine territory. Maybe there are other explanations for the avoidance of pigs in Judahite territories; it is, however, questionable whether the absence of pig bones in Khirbet Qeiyafa should be seen as an ethnic marker.

Let me now address some points related to the “Khirbet Qeiyafa and the Bible”.

The Use of the Term “Minimalists”

According to Garfinkel’s presentation of the evolution of biblical scholarship, since the 1980s “new approaches developed,” which gave rise to the “so-called ‘Minimalist school’ [that] claims that the Hebrew Bible was written in the Hellenistic period” (Garfinkel, *supra* page 41). I am somewhat unhappy with this use of the term “minimalists”. Garfinkel uses it also to qualify those who suggested that Khirbet Qeiyafa is a Philistine city (Garfinkel, *supra* page 42). But this has nothing to do with dating. So one may get the impression that “minimalists” are all those who do not agree with Garfinkel’s interpretation of the site and its historical role.

But let us come back to the use of “minimalist” to qualify biblical scholars. If the question is about “dating the final writing of the Hebrew Bible” (Garfinkel, *supra* page 41) into the Hellenistic period, then almost all academic scholars are “minimalists”, because it is clear that all scrolls of what will become the Hebrew Bible underwent revision as late as the Hellenistic period. As for the Former Prophets, there are certainly revisions that took place still during the 3rd or 2nd centuries. Suffice to remind of the important differences between the Greek and the Hebrew texts in these books.

Dating the final revision of the books of Samuel (and others) into that time does, however, not mean that they do not contain any historical memories and that they were invented. As E. Axel Knauf and many others (Knauf 2001; Bretler 1995; Blum 2000) have argued, the stories about the Philistine connections of David are hardly set up in the Persian and Hellenistic period, but that does not mean that they were written down by an eye-witness of the events.

If “minimalists” are all those who think that the narratives about David’s ascent to the throne and his succession were composed later than during his lifetime, then again almost all serious biblical scholars are “minimalists”, but contrary to Garfinkel’s presentation most scholars would also date the first edition of the books of Samuel and other biblical books much earlier than the Hellenistic period, in the 8th or 7th century BCE. I would suggest to refrain from using the term of “minimalists” in a too broad sense because it is of more ideological than scientific use.

The “House of David” and the Problem of the “Historical David”

Yosef Garfinkel makes rightly use of the Tel Dan inscription (Garfinkel, *supra* page 41) that mentions, if one follows the reading of a very large majority, a “house of David” (see for an overview Athas 2003). The identification of the same expression in the Mesha stele is, however, less certain: André Lemaire has suggested to read in the very damaged line 31 “House of David” (Lemaire 1994), whereas Nadav Na’aman has suggested “house of Daudoh”, a local ruling family (Na’aman 1997). The problem is that in line 12 there is already a mention of DWD but followed by an H, which could be a suffix. The expression ’R’L DWDH can hardly be translated as a reference to David (as suggested by Rainey 2001), but seems more likely refer to the name of a deity (his “Beloved one”) and his altar, that Mesha takes as a booty. So for the moment the only clear mention of a “House of David” – according to the vast majority – is the Tel Dan inscription.

But here again we should apply a strict methodology in reading this inscription. The mention of a “House of David” in an inscription from the 9th or 8th century does not prove *per se* the historicity of King David. It only proves that the kingdom of Judah was also named “House of David”, parallel to the “House of Omri” that appears in Assyrian sources. The Tel Dan inscription tells us only that a man called David was considered to be the founder of the Judahite dynasty.

There is an interesting parallel with the figure of Balaam, who appears in the Bible in Numbers 22–24 and also in the wall inscription of Tell Deir Alla dated to the 9th or 7th century. If one compares both texts, it is clear that they both refer to the same seer Balaam, son of Beor, but the biblical account that presents Balaam interacting with YHWH is quite different from the text of Deir Alla (Blum 2008). It appears therefore that the author(s) of Numbers 22–

24 have taken over a traditional legendary or historical figure in order to set up their own account.

The Tel Dan inscription can therefore not be used to postulate the historicity of the biblical accounts about David. It only shows that David was at the time when the inscription was made considered to be the founder of a dynasty.

The Model Shrine and the Temple of Solomon

The very interesting shrine model discovered in Khirbet Qeiyafa is presented by Yosef Garfinkel as a proof that there was already a model for Solomon's temple before he built the sanctuary. I have no competence in deciding whether this model is a local one or whether it belongs to the imported goods that have been discovered at Khirbet Qeiyafa. Similar shrines are also known from Phoenicia (Keel 1997: 158–159) so that one should also check the possibility of an imported model. The other question is, however, how this model can be related to Solomon's temple. If one reads the biblical account in 1 Kings 6–8 one may ask with Konrad Rupprecht (1977) if the account is not more an account about a restoration of a former sanctuary than a new building. Again, the biblical text of 1 Kings 6–8 did not originate from the report of an eye-witness of the 10th century but was written and heavily edited much later and in a quite complicated way, as indicated by the important differences that exist between MT and LXX. One should therefore be careful by claiming a direct relation between Solomon's temple and the shrine model.

The Identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa with the City of Shaaraim

Because of the presence of two city-gates, Yosef Garfinkel claims that the site should be identified with biblical Shaaraim.

In his monograph on Joshua 15, Jacobus de Vos (de Vos 2003: 388), reminds us of earlier identifications of Shaaraim: Khirbet esh-Sharī'a (Dagan 1996: 139; map ref. 145.124), Khirbet es-Sa'īre/Şağīre (Ahituv 1995: 260; map ref. 145.124) or Khirbet Sa'īre (Rainey 1975: 70; map ref. 152.127). The names of these sites may indeed keep some memories of the name Shaaraim or Shaarim.

Shaaraim is mentioned three times in the Hebrew Bible: in Joshua 15:36, 1 Samuel 17:52 and 1 Chronicles 4:31. Let us consider briefly the content of these passages:

Joshua 15:36 is part of a description of the towns belonging to Judah, and the section – often qualified as “District II” – concerns cities of the Shephelah:

³³ And in the Lowland, Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, ³⁴ Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, ³⁵ Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, ³⁶ *Shaaraim*, Adithaim, Gederah, Gederothaim: fourteen towns and their villages³.

Older research has often considered the list of Judahite towns as “priestly” or “post-priestly” (for a history of research cf. de Vos 2003: 491–520). Following Albrecht Alt (1925) who suggested that the list reflects an administrative organization under Josiah, recent commentaries have argued for a 7th century date, as for instance E. Axel Knauf (2008: 145): “Die Ortsliste verwertet eine geographische Statistik des Königreichs Juda vom Ende des 7. Jh. v. Chr.”. Frank Moore Cross and G. Ernest Wright (1956: 226) and also Volkmart Fritz (1994: 164) suppose that the list is older and think of the time between the 9th and the 8th century BCE. Even if one accepts this “high” date, it does not fit well with the suggested identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa, because why would a destroyed place be counted among Judahite towns and villages during the time of the monarchy?

The mention of *Shaaraim* in Chronicles occurs also in a list (1 Chr 4), which has Joshua 15 and Joshua 19 as *Vorlage*. The context is a genealogy of the tribe of Simeon (starting in v. 24):

²⁸ They lived in Beer-sheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual, ²⁹ Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, ³⁰ Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, ³¹ Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and *Shaaraim*. These were their towns until David became king and their villages.

The book of Chronicles is commonly dated (with almost no exception) to the late Persian or early Hellenistic period. Interestingly, places that in Joshua 15 and 19 belong to Judah are here attributed to the Simeonites, a tribe that in other biblical texts is closely related to Judah (especially in Judges 1). There is much discussion why in the Persian or Hellenistic period the author of 1 Chronicles 4 makes such a change. Gary Knoppers (2004: 372–375) points out that the Chronicler – contrary to the so-called Deuteronomistic History, which presents the history of the Northern and Southern kingdoms – is more interested in a “tribal” Israel. This question does not need to be discussed further. Interestingly v. 31 ends with the statement “These were their towns until David became king and their villages”. This phrase has sometimes been considered a gloss, the aim of which would be to harmonize the attributions of these places to the Simeonites with the book of Joshua by claiming that there were only Simeonites until the beginning of the monarchy (Michaeli 1967: 50).

The mention of *Shaaraim* may not have played a major role in this context, since the author of 1 Chronicles 4 just took it over from Joshua 15.

³ There is a problem with the number 14, since 15 places are enumerated. The last name is probably the result of dittography (Fritz 1994: 166).

The third mention of Shaaraim occurs at the end of the David and Goliath narrative in 1 Samuel 17, where after David's victory, the Philistines are entirely defeated.

⁵² The men of Israel and Judah rose up and shouted and pursued the Philistines [lacking in LXX] as far as Gath and the gates of Ekron (*ša'ārê eqrôn*), so that the wounded Philistines fell on the way of Shaaraim (*bəḏerekā ša'ārayim*); as far as Gath and Ekron.

There is a text-critical problem in this verse. Instead of “way of Shaaraim”, LXX reads: ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ τῶν πυλῶν. Therefore several scholars following Wellhausen (1871: 109–110) translate “they fell on the road of the [Twin] Gates” (Auld 2011: 205, see also 207; Dhorme 1910: 157). If one does not accept this text-critical operation, the verse would rather suggest a location of Shaaraim west of Azekah, since it appears then as the most Western place before arriving in Gath or Ekron (de Vos 2003: 393–394; Knoppers 2003: 366).

Whatever decision one is willing to take, the text does not reflect a situation of the 10th century. The mention of the “troops of Israel and Judah” may indicate that the text reflects the situation of the two kingdoms. In addition, Goliath's armor reflects the garb of Greek hoplites in the 7th to the 5th centuries BCE (Finkelstein 2002: 147). – The story is therefore hardly older than the 8th or 7th century.

Yosef Garfinkel writes that “the biblical traditions do indeed locate a large number of military clashes in these settings” (Garfinkel, *supra* page 45). If the “setting” means Khirbet Qeiyafa = Shaaraim, 1 Samuel 17:52 would be the only place. If he alludes to the conflicts between the Philistines and the “Israelites” that are related in the books of Samuel, things become more complicated, since David also appears as an ally of the Philistines, so that one could even speculate whether the “historical David” was in fact a Philistine vassal.

Summing up our enquiry on the biblical Shaaraim, it can be said that none of the three texts belong to the beginning of the 1st millennium. In fact, it is even possible that there was only one mention of Shaaraim in the Hebrew Bible if Joshua 15 has been copied (partially) by the author of 1 Chronicles 4⁴ and if 1 Samuel 17 alluded to city gates.

Be that as it may, it is clear that the identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa with Shaaraim raises two related problems that should be resolved: Khirbet Qeiyafa was destroyed or abandoned in the 10th century BCE. Why then is the site mentioned, not as an important site of the past as for instance Shilo, but *en passant*, in texts from the 8th to the 4th century BCE? If Khirbet Qeiyafa was an important place of David's reign, coming immediately after Jerusalem, as sug-

⁴ And even there some suspect that the primitive text did not mention Shaaraim (see the summary in Knoppers 2003: 361)

gested by Yosef Garfinkel, why then are the biblical texts not at all interested in this place?⁵

What Happened to Khirbet Qeiyafa?

The short lifespan of Khirbet Qeiyafa in the 10th century BCE is commonly accepted. The interesting question, however, is: how do we explain the end of the site? Was it destroyed and by whom? Aren Maeir suggests to understand the existence of the site as a “short lived attempt of the Judahite polity to extend its influence to the west”, an attempt that was squashed by the Kingdom of Gath (Maeir, *supra* page 81). If this is the case, why don’t we have traces of that in the Hebrew Bible? If Khirbet Qeiyafa was so important for the Davidic administration why is its disappearance not reflected at all in the Bible? In my view this question is important in order to solve the historical riddle of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

Brief Summary

Everyone will agree that the excavation of the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa counts among the most important archaeological finds in Israel during the last decades and we should thank Yosef Garfinkel for sharing so quickly the important discoveries that he and his team made. Khirbet Qeiyafa sheds new light on the 10th century BCE, but we still need to understand what this new light means for historical and biblical research. Maybe one should not “personalize” the site too much by relating all kinds of buildings and finds to David and Solomon. It could be that the historical reality of the 10th century in Judah and Philistia is quite different from a biblical historicist reconstruction.

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⁵ The identification with Shaaraim has also been challenged by Na’aman (2008: Gob); Dagan (2009: Adithaim) and Galil (2010: Neta’im).

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The Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostrakon in its Setting

Benjamin SASS

The Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon was found in a stratum well set apart stratigraphically, and its relative dating around the Iron I–II transition is more or less settled. For the ^{14}C dating the first two thirds of the 10th century seem to be preferable, further considerations probably pinpointing the Iron I–II transition to the middle decades of the century. The contents of the ostrakon, except for a few words or parts of words, remain undeciphered, and the nature of the text cannot be determined. Despite various attempts, the biblical name of the site remains unknown. The issue of the site's affiliation – ethnic and political, presents numerous open questions, to which conflicting answers have been offered – Philistine, Canaanite, Judahite (and Davidic), Benjaminite (and Saulide)... While some proposals may be more plausible than others, the speculative nature of all is clearly manifest, hence my feeling that the debate about Qeiyafa's affiliation is currently adrift in over-interpretation. The aim of the paper thus is to review all the above open questions and a few more, while emphasizing the limitations of the data. An excursus addresses the architectural décor of the Qeiyafa limestone ark or model shrine.

Introduction

Yosef Garfinkel's excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa are amongst the most fascinating in Israel in the last decade. The ostrakon (Misgav, Garfinkel and Ganor 2009; *Fig. 1* herein), written in ink on a sherd of a locally-made jar (*ibid.*: 244), has been the subject of numerous popular and scholarly publications. And whether or not one agrees with Garfinkel's ideas about Qeiyafa – in particular his well-publicized wish to interpret the site as part of a developed Davidic kingdom ca. 1000 BCE (e.g. Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: vii) – one is prompted by them to think and to rethink old positions. Indeed, the site proved so unusual, so incompatible with existing points of view, that it sent colleagues scrambling for explanations.

The starting-point for the inquiry is Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 159, from where I attempt to take the study of the ostrakon's time-frame, and Qeiyafa's setting, a few steps forward.¹ This paper addresses the ostrakon's archaeologi-

¹ The paper benefited significantly from Israel Finkelstein's involvement. He has gone over the manuscript, and his numerous observations and ideas, now integrated into the text, are gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are equally due to Thomas Römer for his advice regarding the biblical issues and for most of the bibliographical references to biblical studies. Both of them do not necessarily share the views expressed herein.



Fig. 1: The Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon (courtesy of the Qeiyafa expedition, photo Megavision Lab).

cal context, relative dating of the context by pottery, relative dating of the ostrakon by palaeography (this is the longest chapter), identification of words, nature of the text, and Qeiyafa's ethnic and political affiliation. An excursus addresses the architectural décor of the Qeiyafa limestone ark or model shrine.

The Archaeological Context, and Its Relative Dating by Pottery

Fortunately for West Semitic palaeography, the Iron Age layer in which the Qeiyafa ostrakon was unearthed is set apart stratigraphically (Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: 32–35; Misgav, Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: 243): Founded on bedrock,² Qeiyafa Stratum IV is followed, after a considerable gap, by the late Persian – early Hellenistic Stratum III. Accordingly, the archaeological context of the ostrakon is assured.

Yet, the identification of the precise Iron Age phase of Stratum IV has been contested. Garfinkel and Kang (2011: 180–181) were in favour of early Iron

² Isolated Middle Bronze sherds were also found, but no architecture or finds *in situ* (Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: 33).

IIA, whereas in Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 159, elaborating on studies by Singer-Avitz (2010, 2012) and Gilboa (2012), among others, we have opted for the very end of Iron Age I or the Iron Age I–II transition, a proposal first made in Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012: note 3; not very differently also Garfinkel and Kang 2012: 181.³ This uncertainty is real: it is due to the unique character of the pottery assemblage in short-lived Stratum IV, revealing a point in the Iron Age never isolated before. The assemblage “post-dates classical late Iron I settlements such as Tel Qasile X and Beth-Shemesh 4 and pre-dates classic early Iron IIA settlements such as Lachish V and Arad XII (and thus, for the time being, this phase is unknown at any other site)” (Finkelstein and Fantalkin *loc. cit.*). On further reflection, Beth-Shemesh 4 could belong rather close to Qeiyafa IV,⁴ so that both strata may probably be ascribed to the Iron I–II transition. Once archaeology has become aware of its existence, this transitional phase will hopefully be detected at more sites, and eventually be understood better.

Relative Dating of the Ostrakon by Palaeography

An abridged history of the alphabet up to Iron IIA is presented first, integrating the Qeiyafa letters once the Iron I–II transition is reached.

The alphabet was created by speakers of a West Semitic tongue either in the Sinai under Egyptian domination or in Egypt itself, mostly employing hieroglyphic Egyptian models for the pictographic letters (e.g. Sass 2005a, 2008). It was Albright (1926: 75), who first labelled the inscriptions “Proto-Sinaitic”. Frustratingly, the dating evidence is contradictory; it seems to point to two alternative time-frames, very wide apart, for the birth of the alphabet: either ca. 1800 BCE, an idea revived by Goldwasser (e.g. 2006: 143–144; 2012: 12), or ca. 1300 BCE (Sass 2005a: 157). This issue, and several others concerning the alphabet in the 2nd millennium and its birthplace, cannot be developed further in the present paper.

The next phase in the history of the alphabet is no less enigmatic. Under still obscure circumstances, alphabetic writing seems to have vanished from Egypt, resurfacing in the Egyptian-controlled Shephelah (Sass 2005a: 152–156; Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 183–184 and Map 1). If one is looking for stratified inscriptions only, the alphabet is found first in Late Bronze contexts

³ “The pottery assemblage of Khirbet Qeiyafa is a typological ‘bridge’ between two periods. It maintains the Iron Age I tradition, while introducing several characteristics that later became the classical markers of the Iron Age IIA. Being a single-period Iron Age site of short duration, Khirbet Qeiyafa reveals a curtailed time-span of 20 years or so, ... Such a short period could never be identified at large tell sites because they were occupied continuously for hundreds of years.”

⁴ Bunimovitz and Lederman 2016: 213–214. Both Qeiyafa IV and Beth-Shemesh 4 are post-bichrome, hence probably later than Qasile X.

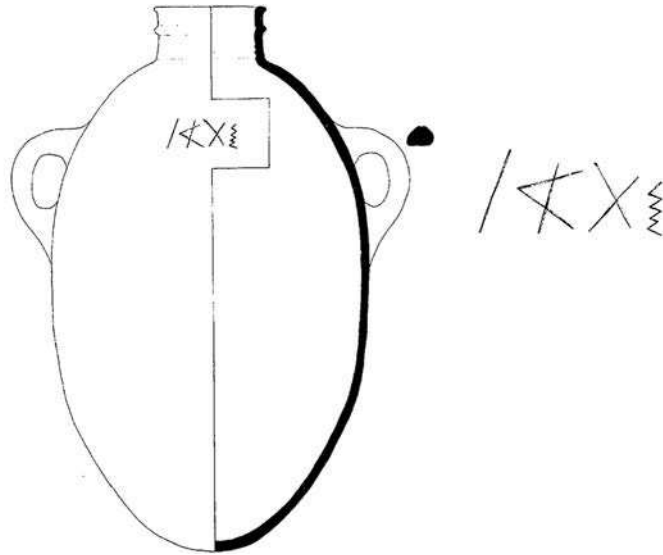


Fig. 2: Tel Rehov Inscription 2 (Ahituv and Mazar 2014: 190; courtesy of A. Mazar, Tel Rehov Excavations, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem).

of the 13th and 12th centuries at Lachish and neighbouring sites – Qubur al-Walaydah and possibly Tel Nagila (Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 153–156, 176, with earlier references).⁵ In this phase the alphabet lost many of its pictographic aspects while still keeping others; it also kept multidirectional writing. Frank Moore Cross (e.g. Cross and Freedman 1952: 7) labelled this stage “Proto-Canaanite”. One may as well employ the term “linear alphabet” (e.g. Cross 1967: 10*), in order to distinguish this script from its contemporary adoption in cuneiform guise in Ugarit and the rest of the northern and central Levant.

And to yet another enigma: Judging by the stratified inscriptions – and they are still very few – the linear alphabet seems to have remained confined to the Shephelah for the next three or four hundred years – Late Bronze II–III and Iron I. Meanwhile, the region has become Philistia. Only in early Iron IIA did the alphabet begin to spread to Phoenicia and to other parts of the West Semitic area (Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 157–163, 173–175, 187–189, with Map 2).⁶

The earliest stratified example of the linear alphabet outside Philistia and its vicinity, dating to early Iron IIA, comes from Tel Rehov on the Israel–Aram border. A complete jar uncovered *in situ* in Stratum VI (Fig. 2) bears letters that still look Proto-Canaanite, though meticulously executed. Two inscribed sherds were also found in this stratum (Mazar and Ahituv 2011: 300–302 =

⁵ On the Lachish dagger and Gezer Sherd see Sass 2005a: 150, 153 and *passim*; Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 156.

⁶ In the rest of the Levant beyond Philistia, wherever the alphabet was in use before early Iron IIA, it may have been the cuneiform version (Sass 2005b: 53–54).

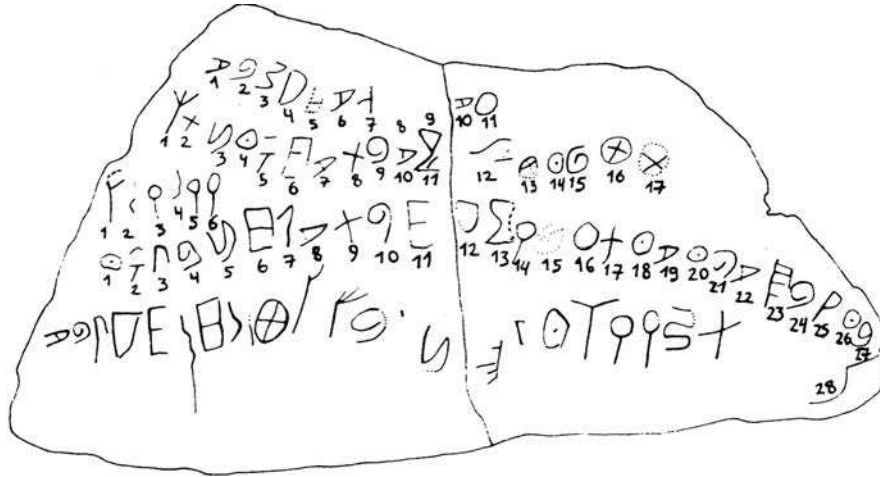


Fig. 3: 'Izbet Šarṭah ostrakon (Sass 1988: Fig. 175).

Ahituv and Mazar 2014: 40–42; Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 161). Moreover, the complete jar comes from an early phase of early Iron IIA at Rehov (Ahituv and Mazar 2014: 40). Founded, as it is, on the limited stratified material available, our dating of the movement of the alphabet beyond Philistia to early Iron IIA and not earlier will be substantiated or challenged by future discoveries.

But even in Philistia proper not a single inscription in the linear alphabet from a secure early or middle Iron I context can be accounted for, an absence possibly reflecting a diminished usage of writing (Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 176). And also in late Iron I the alphabet is not represented for sure: the chief Iron I site in the region, Tel Migne, yielded no contemporary texts at all, and the four inscribed sherds from other sites in Philistia and its environs with letter-shapes similar to Qeiyafa may belong to either late Iron I or early Iron IIA. Moreover, early Iron IIA seems to possess a certain edge for at least two inscriptions among the four (below).

This brings me back to the Qeiyafa ostrakon (*Fig. 1*). It contains more than 60 letters, so that among the Proto-Canaanite inscriptions it is currently the second longest – just behind the 'Izbet Šarṭah ostrakon with 84 letters (Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 157, 159; *Fig. 3* herein). The script of the Qeiyafa ostrakon is still entirely Proto-Canaanite, preserving some pictographic aspects like the dot in the *'ayin*, as well as the left-to-right text and variable direction of the individual letters. The three different stances of the *alep* are particularly eye-catching (Misgav, Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: 250, 252).

Of the other four inscriptions from the region with Proto-Canaanite writing similar to Qeiyafa, only one is stratified, or possibly stratified:



Fig. 4: Tell eṣ-Ṣafi sherd (Maeir *et al.* 2008: 49).

- The hand-burnished Tell eṣ-Ṣafi sherd (Maeir *et al.* 2008; Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 159–160; *Fig. 4* herein) comes from the early Iron IIA Layer A4. But such surface treatment emerges already late in Iron I and, due to its small size, the sherd could alternatively be a stray from the previous level, as noted by Maeir *et al.* (2008: 47). On the other hand, the conspicuous absence of inscriptions at late Iron I Tel Migne (above) may weaken the option of a similar dating for the Tell eṣ-Ṣafi sherd, substantiating its origin in the early Iron IIA stratum in which it was unearthed.
- Two of the three other texts – the Beth-Shemesh Baal sherd and ostrakon (Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 157, 159; *Figs. 5–6* herein) – are unstratified, and the fourth, the ‘Izbet Ṣarṭah ostrakon, already mentioned (*Fig. 3*), was found in a secondary deposition. It is thus impossible to judge by their contexts how close in time to one another the five sherds and their letter types are. This is why in the 2013 paper (*loc. cit.*) we gave the three a range similar to the maximum conceivable for the Tell eṣ-Ṣafi sherd – late Iron I to early Iron IIA; at the time it seemed to us the safest guess. With hindsight, early Iron IIA is possibly the likelier option also for the Beth-Shemesh ostrakon, the nearest parallel to the Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon among the four inscriptions mentioned above. Both are written in ink, and there are similarities in the script, for instance the *alep*. The unstratified Beth-Shemesh text may thus be attributed by way of conjecture to Stratum 4 of the current excavation (see “The archaeological context, and its relative dating by pottery” above, with note 4).

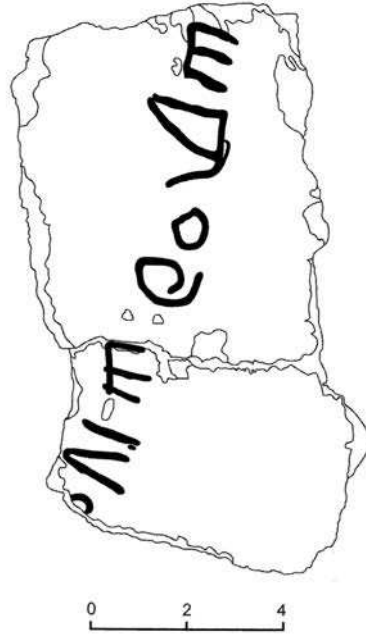


Fig. 5: Beth-Shemesh Baal sherd (McCarter, Bunimovitz and Lederman 2011: 188).



Fig. 6: Beth-Shemesh ostrakon (Sass 1988: Figs. 169, 170).

Finally, I am coming to the unstratified Ophel pithos sherd (Mazar, Ben-Shlomo and Aḥituv 2013; *Fig. 7* herein). Its letter shapes are relatively close to those from Khirbet Qeiyafa and the four other texts just mentioned. But, beyond other issues, an enigma concerning the Ophel sherd has to be solved before we can draw any conclusion from the said closeness: It is about the apparent contradiction between the archaic letter shapes of the Ophel inscription, seemingly fitting an early Iron IIA dating *at the latest*, and the advanced form

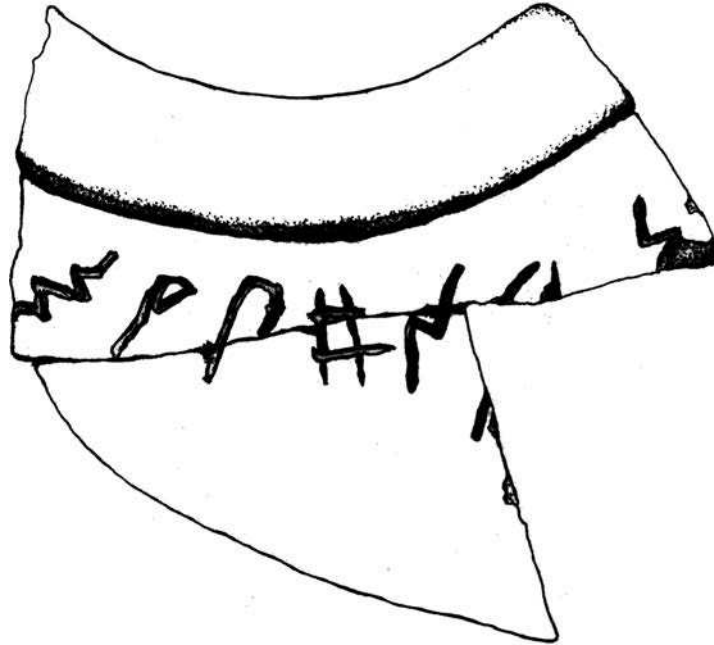


Fig. 7: Ophel pithos sherd (Mazar, Ben-Shlomo and Aḥituv 2013: Fig. 3).

of the pithos, fitting a late Iron IIA dating *at the earliest* (Mazar, Ben-Shlomo and Aḥituv 2013: 43;⁷ Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 162–163).

Identified Words and the Nature of the Text

Some words, or roots, or name-components, in the Qeiyafa ostrakon are legible: *mlk*, *ʿbd*, *špt*, perhaps a few more, among 20-odd words in all. They were pointed out in the first edition by Misgav (2009: 254–255) and by Yardeni (2009), and mostly agreed to by subsequent commentators. For the contents of the ostrakon I thus follow these two authors, as well as Millard (2011) and Lemaire (2012: 5–6) who, realizing how little is legible and how unclear the word division often is, refrained from offering a total reconstruction. Taking these difficulties into account, two or three cautious suggestions as to the possible general sense of the text were also made. But this sober judgment held no appeal for other colleagues, who saw letters even where the common herd discerns nothing. Their complete reconstructions and decipherments are indeed enchanting; no two of them are the same, though. Returning to the prosaic

⁷ “Even though no type B pithos has yet been found in any other early Iron IIA context, it is plausible, on the basis of the abovementioned evidence, that it should be dated to a developed phase of that period.”

reality, one cannot reach conclusions about the ostrakon's content from just a handful of words or parts thereof.⁸

The Ethnic and Political Affiliation of Khirbet Qeiyafa

In theory, one could tackle Khirbet Qeiyafa's affiliation according to at least four criteria: the language of the ostrakon, the location of the site, its biblical name, and its material culture.⁹ In practice the limitations of the data render this inquiry all but impossible. Hence each of the open questions concerning the identity of Khirbet Qeiyafa's inhabitants and rulers is remarked on below, but not the proposed answers: Some of them may be more convincing than others, but not a single one can be shown to be conclusive.¹⁰

1. Language

The language of the Qeiyafa ostrakon is not decided. By the location of the site the language spoken there likely belongs to the Canaanite family, and one Canaanite language, Phoenician, can to the best of my knowledge be excluded on the same evidence: In this southerly region and early period it is an improbable option. The choice is rather between a language spoken in the Shephelah and Judahite Hebrew,¹¹ yet we know next to nothing about the two in the 10th century, and it is certainly impossible to tell them apart from the mere handful of legible strings of letters in the ostrakon.¹²

⁸ The question of the ostrakon's language is addressed in the next section.

⁹ The ostrakon's letter shapes in relation to the language of the text are not addressed: At this early date they are not yet differentiated by language or region – into Hebrew, Aramaic, Phoenician etc.; this happened subsequently, in late Iron IIA and in Iron IIB (Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 175–176, and *passim*). Nor are the identifications of the individual letters in the *editio princeps* (Misgav, Garfinkel and Ganor 2009; Yardeni 2009), about half of the 60-plus total, dealt with in the present paper.

¹⁰ Among these proposals are Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: 8–10, and Galil 2009 (Davidic); Na'aman 2008, 2010, and Koch 2012: 55–56 (Canaanite); Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012, and Levin 2014 (Saulide).

¹¹ Working back from the few Philistia texts of the 7th century (Naveh in Dothan, Gitin and Naveh 1997: 13; Gitin and Cogan 1999; Lemaire 2000), the language of Qeiyafa Stratum IV, while not Phoenician itself, could show affinities with neighboring Phoenician, possibly also with Israelite Hebrew, besides the more likely Judahite Hebrew. As is well known, Philistia has eventually undergone a 'Phoenicianization', but this started later than the Iron I–II transition.

¹² A further criterion for the site's affiliation could in theory be the typological dating of Khirbet Qeiyafa's script in relation to the alphabet's evolving distribution between Iron I and II: If the ostrakon just precedes the early Iron IIA diffusion of the alphabet to other parts of the Levant (see "Relative dating of the ostrakon by palaeography" above), its writing belongs westwards to Philistia, the core area of the linear alphabet. But in reality such precision within early Iron IIA is beyond the resolution that archaeology or palaeography can provide.

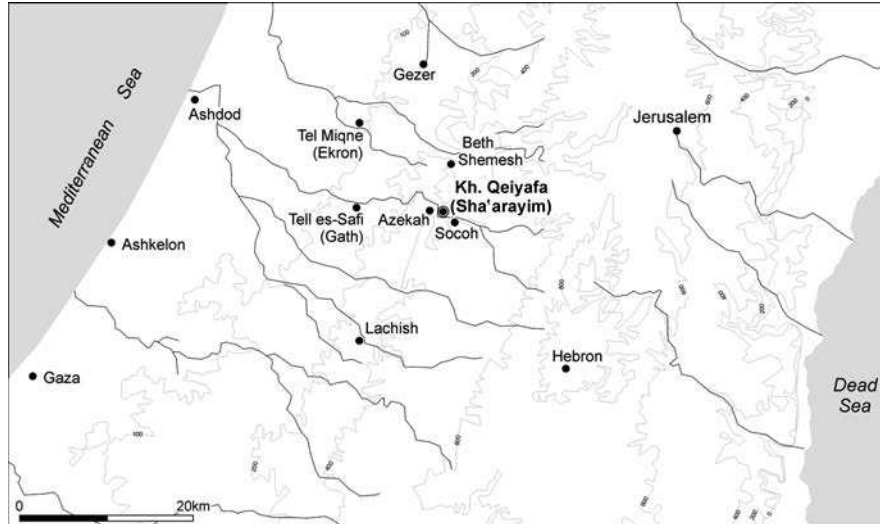


Fig. 8: Khirbet Qeiyafa's location between Philistia and Judah (courtesy of the Qeiyafa expedition = Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: 26).

2. *The Site's Location*

Qeiyafa is situated between the highlands and the lowlands (*Fig. 8*). Tell es-Şafi/Gath lies some 10 km to the west and Jerusalem 30 km to the east. But I doubt whether the attempts by several commentators to decide the site's affiliation by its position, dating, and the biblical text can be of any use. The available data is far too meager.

3. *The Ancient Name of the Site*

Likewise of little or no use are about seven proposed identifications of Qeiyafa with biblical place-names:¹³ From their excessive diversity and the lack of consensus I cannot but conclude that the ancient name of the site remains unknown. Besides, the 10th century name of short-lived Qeiyafa Stratum IV is not guaranteed to be mentioned in the biblical text written centuries later.

4. *Material Culture – Architecture and Movable Finds*

- *The plan of the site* (*Fig. 9*). With a casemate wall crowning a hilltop, the plan is obviously befitting the hill country. That the site is fortified and the

¹³ See the references in note 10 to some of these proposals.

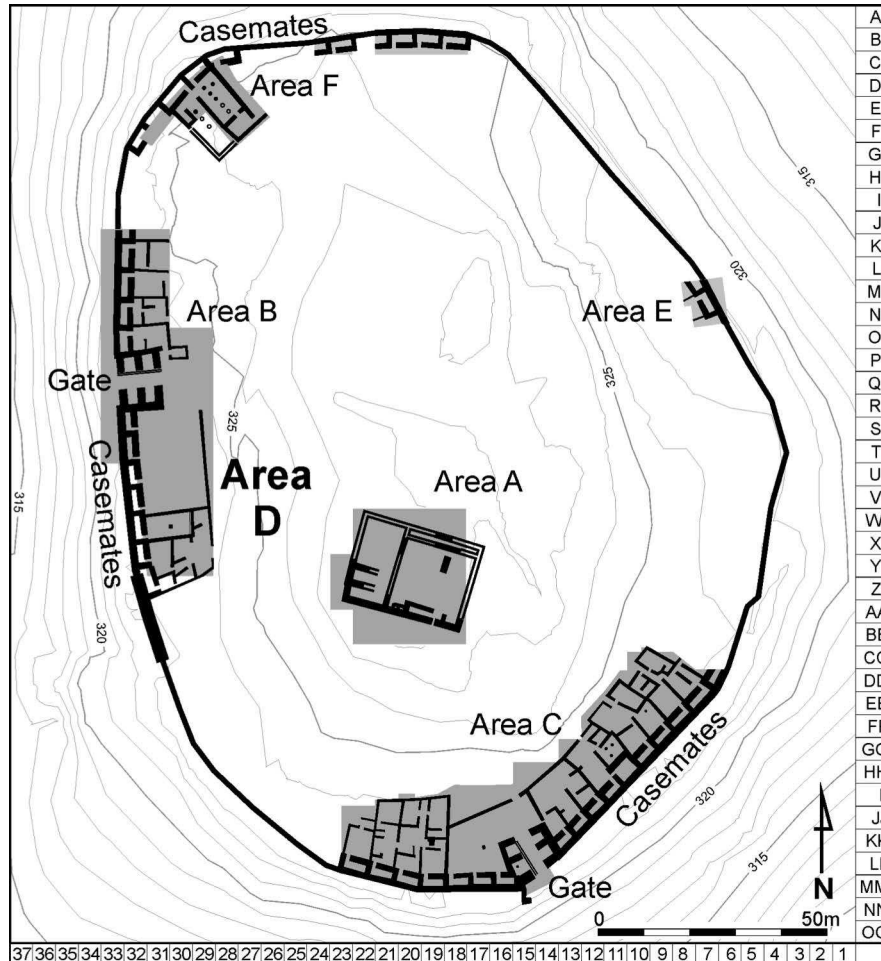


Fig. 9: Khirbet Qeiyafa – plan (courtesy of the Qeiyafa expedition).

fortifications are meticulously constructed is remarkable in itself for this early period, and the presence of two gates a specialty.¹⁴

But can the plan as such decide whether the inhabitants and/or rulers of the site were Judahite, Benjaminite, Philistine, Canaanite..., or is the plan essentially practical? I prefer the latter. True, contemporary casemate walls are known in Benjamin (Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012: 42–43), but why should they be the inspiration for Qeiyafa, if such walls are known in contemporary Moab too? Is it not conceivable that anyone who controlled this hilltop and required fortifications and could afford them, would have

¹⁴ Interestingly, the openings of the casemates on each side of each gate are always oriented away from the gate (Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel 2012: 164, Fig. 13).

adapted their construction to the topography and available building material – limestone – in a similar fashion for maximum advantage? The fact that so few excavated settlements from the Iron I–II transition period have fortifications does not indicate that such fortifications were forgotten everywhere else. On the contrary: As shown by its grand revival in Iron II, the 2nd millennium expertise in architecture and art seems to have been kept in memory throughout Iron I even while seldom applied (e.g. Sass 2005b: 21, 77; Ben-Shlomo and Dothan 2006; Ben-Shlomo 2011).

- *The pottery assemblage.* With the presence of certain Judahite and coastal types and absence of others, the pottery fits “the specific location of the site between the highlands and the Coastal Plain” (Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012: 49–50, citing Garfinkel and Kang, and Singer-Avitz), and as such it can hardly instruct us about who inhabited or controlled Qeiyafa – Judahites, Philistines or others.
- *The absence of pig bones.* Can this absence be taken for an indicator of ‘Judahiteness’ (cf. Garfinkel, *supra* pages 27 and 43 and Maeir, *supra* page 62)? Pig bones are duly absent from Judahite sites as far as I know, but also from contemporary non-Judahite ones (Sapir-Hen *et al.* 2013: 10). In borderline Qeiyafa the said absence does not resolve the site’s ethnic affiliation.

On the Absolute Dating and Historical Setting of Khirbet Qeiyafa and Its Ostrakon

Yosef Garfinkel’s widely advertised perception of Qeiyafa as part of a developed Davidic kingdom sets out from the traditional chronology of the early Israelite kings (below), combined with the veteran notion that Iron IIA is the archaeological manifestation of the United Monarchy as described in the Bible. In this way early Iron IIA is made to correspond to David’s reign, both beginning ca. 1000 BCE. As noted below, the uncritical equation of the eighty regnal years accorded to David and Solomon in the Bible with years BCE and archaeological periods, can hardly serve as a guideline in this case.

The absolute dates assigned herein to the period in question follow the low chronology. First proposed twenty years ago (Finkelstein 1996), the beginning of this system has been revised upwards since – with the Iron I–II transition re-dated to the mid 10th century; the transition from early to late Iron IIA remains in the early 9th century (e.g. Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 180).¹⁵ By way of para-

¹⁵ The upward adjustment was brought about by the accumulation of ¹⁴C dates, at the same time adopting the emphasis which Herzog and Singer-Avitz (2004; 2006; 2011) put on subdividing Iron IIA into early and late. Archaeologically, the transition from early to late Iron IIA in the early 9th century is no less significant than the transition from Iron I to Iron II several decades before: This leaves the Omride attribution of late Iron IIA strata with the first monumental Iron Age architecture much as in the original proposal. In

phrase one may now speak of a modified low chronology, whose beginning for the Iron Age II is not too different from that of Amihai Mazar's 'modified conventional chronology' (see Finkelstein and Piasezky 2011).¹⁶

Regarding the ¹⁴C datings for Qeiyafa Stratum IV, Garfinkel's range (Garfinkel *et al.* 2012: 362–363) is 1046–996, while Finkelstein and Piasezky's (2015: 901–902) is 1010–936 – both at 68% probability. The former range refers to the Iron I–II transitional phase at Qeiyafa alone, the latter to Qeiyafa in its regional context – with neighbouring sites such as Beth-Shemesh indicating that Iron I lasted into the second half of the 11th century. Further considerations may reduce the duration of the Iron I–II transition to the middle of the 10th century (e.g. Finkelstein and Piasezky 2011: 51; Finkelstein and Sass 2013: 180).

A few words on the chronology of the early biblical kings may be in order concerning Garfinkel's ideas about the Davidic affiliation of Khirbet Qeiyafa. A typical follower of the traditional Bible chronology, Cogan (1992: table on p. 1010), made the 2 years allotted to Saul in 2 Samuel 13:1 into 20, yet accepted the biblical numbers of 40 + 40 for David (2 Samuel 5:4) and Solomon (1 Kings 11:42), and an estimated 3-year coregency. He thus arrived at 1025–1005, 1005–965 and 968–928 for Saul, David and Solomon respectively. In contrast, numerous colleagues regard the biblical numbers for David and Solomon as typological, meaning no more than "long reign", and almost certainly too long.¹⁷

Likewise, some do question the biblical number of 140 years or so, counting from Omri's accession ca. 882 BCE back to Saul's.¹⁸ Indeed, the schematic 100-year time of Saul, David and Solomon should almost certainly be shortened – by how much is anybody's guess. And while their regnal lengths are

the same spirit, Finkelstein and Sass 2013 revised upward also several of the absolute datings of inscriptions proposed in Sass 2005b, in which this revision and subdivision were not yet followed.

¹⁶ The Iron I–II transition in Mazar's chronology was gradually revised downwards while Finkelstein's was being revised upwards, until both practically met in the middle. Recently, Mazar dated the transition "no later than 960 BCE" (Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2010: 1682), and somewhat differently three years afterwards: "the Iron I/II transition started in the first half of the 10th century and ended in the second half" (Lee, Bronk Ramsey and Mazar 2013: 739).

¹⁷ Here is but one example from a recent publication, Levin 2014: 53: "The attribution of exactly forty years to both David and Solomon is surprising, for it is unreasonable that father and son should each have reigned for so many years. In particular the typological number forty, symbolizing a 'complete period' in the Hebrew Bible and in other ancient sources, raises the suspicion of being inexact. It is thus well-nigh possible that David's accession should be lowered by several decades, into the 10th century." (So in the re-worked Hebrew version; not in Levin 2012.)

¹⁸ Omri being the earliest Israelite king linked to the absolute chronology of Assyria.

recorded in the Bible with apparent precision, the later pre-Omriddes lack any extra-biblical corroboration.¹⁹

However, not only the regnal years of the early Israelite kings are problematic: As is long known, most if not all the biblical text referring to the United Monarchy is later than the events described, and there is hardly an agreement on which are the most reliable passages. Fact and fiction are so intermixed in the Saul, David and Solomon accounts, the inner contradictions so abundant, that numerous questions are left open: Did the three (or more?) kings reign in succession, or in part simultaneously?²⁰ Over one and the same kingdom, or separately over two?²¹ Or three?²² What was the extent of these kingdoms?²³ Was Solomon a genuine Davidide, or has he been designated so retrospectively?²⁴ Unsurprisingly there is little consensus, with perhaps a single exception: most specialists will agree that the biblical accounts and regnal lengths of Saul, David and Solomon, as they stand, cannot be taken for eyewitness reports, and should not be made use of without caution in any chronological or historical reconstruction.

Can the early kings be synchronized with archaeological periods? If the Iron I–II transition is placed about the mid 10th century (above), do all pre-Omriddes fit into the ca. 50–70 years of early Iron IIA, or should the earliest among them be relegated to late Iron I? The perception of the absolute dates for these kings is vague enough to permit several scenarios.

Outcome and epilogue

Back to Qeiyafa's location and archaeology with regard to the questions addressed above, here is an outline of the diverse answers proposed herein and of the questions that remain open, arranged by descending order of their reliability.

Reliable

- The archaeological context: Qeiyafa's Stratum IV is well set apart stratigraphically.
- The relative dating of the pottery to the Iron I–II transition is essentially agreed. It refines moreover the wider relative range of the ostrakon obtained by letter typology.

¹⁹ And so, some commentators contemplated whether Jeroboam ben Nebat is but a retrojection based on Jeroboam ben Joash (e.g. Römer 2014: 144).

²⁰ E.g. Edelman 1996: 158; Finkelstein 2002: 127–128.

²¹ *Loc. cit.*

²² E.g. Knauf 1991: 174 and note 25 = 2013a: 90.

²³ E.g. Finkelstein 2013.

²⁴ E.g. Veijola 1979 = 2000; Knauf 1997: 87–90 = 2013b: 155–158.

Plausible

- On the absolute ¹⁴C chronology of Qeiyafa Stratum IV, I prefer the approach that addresses the dating in its regional context, pointing to roughly the first two thirds of the 10th century. Further considerations may narrow the Iron I–II transition in the region, and hence Qeiyafa Stratum IV, down to the middle decades of that century.

Too many conflicting answers per question = effectively none

- Attempted identification of Qeiyafa's ethnic and political affiliation.
- Attempted identification of Qeiyafa's biblical name.
- Attempted identification of the ostrakon's language and contents by words deciphered or presumed deciphered.

The bids to guess the ethnic and political affiliation of Qeiyafa, its biblical name, the language of the ostrakon, and its contents were inconclusive. Let me summarize here just the first two.

- Judging by the location of Qeiyafa between the highlands and the lowlands, the population *may* have regarded itself as belonging to one of just two main groups, Judahite or Philistine and spoken one of just two languages. Or else the inhabitants had a wider array of options to choose their identity from. We simply do not know.
- Nor can a clear picture of the political affiliation and historical setting of Qeiyafa Stratum IV be gained directly from the data collected. A number of hypotheses were formulated, mainly from the biblical material referring to this early period, but as we all know the historicity of this material is highly contested. A dependence on Jerusalem or other centres was thus envisaged, as was *independence*. Regarding the latter option,²⁵ and lacking contemporary written sources for this region, how can one tell whether or not additional, smaller polities have sprung up amid the principal ones? Whether or not local warlords have seized power here and there for limited periods of time?²⁶ The speculative nature of the scenarios proposed (see note 10) is so manifest that there is hardly a preference for any one of them over the others.

In effect, the above gave me the impression that the debate about Qeiyafa's ethnic and political affiliation is currently adrift in over-interpretation, with no

²⁵ Fantalkin 2008: 29; Lehmann and Niemann 2014: 77, and *passim*.

²⁶ Such an entity could perhaps have been similar to some of the local Amarna-period polities (I. Finkelstein's suggestion). Turning to a potential 1st millennium parallel for Qeiyafa, the ephemeral Azatiwata in the 8th century is quite illuminating: Without his Luwian–Phoenician bilingual (Younger 2000; Hawkins 2005), who will have ascribed the impressive new city of Karatepe–Azatiwataya to a short-lived, locally powerful ruler and kingmaker within the larger kingdom of Adana?

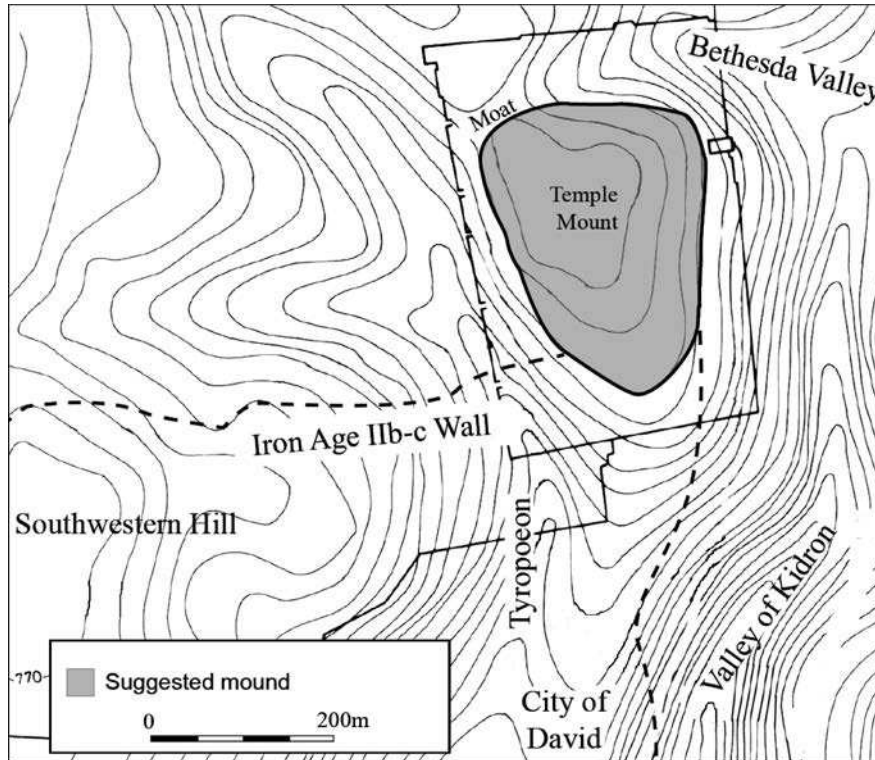


Fig. 10: Jerusalem. In grey the proposed extent of the town in the Late Bronze to Iron IIA (Courtesy of Israel Finkelstein = Finkelstein, Koch and Lipschits 2011: 16).

consensus in sight. If we liken Qeiyafa to a lemon, several colleagues attempted to squeeze out of it more juice than it could possibly have held originally. But rather than ending the paper on this gloomy note, I opt for once to join the speculation, deplored only a few paragraphs back. Yet in this most recent addition to the multitude of scenarios for Qeiyafa's affiliation I assert that mine is as unverifiable as the rest.

A dating in the Iron I–II transition, the mid 10th century, assuming the alphabet has just begun its move out of Philistia then (see “Relative dating...” above), could just make a Jerusalem link and Judahite Hebrew language possible for the ostrakon. On such a background Qeiyafa may even be considered Davidic – in case one is willing (as noted above) to locate King David's reign about the mid 10th century. With the oval plan of its casemate wall crowning a summit, Qeiyafa could be assumed to emulate Jerusalem. For who can assert that under David ‘the mound on the mount’ (Finkelstein, Koch and Lipschits 2011: 3, 16), was not similarly fortified? In *Figs. 9–10* at any rate, the two sites



Fig. 11: Qeiyafa limestone ark (courtesy of the Qeiyafa expedition, photo Gabi Laron).

look remarkably similar in outline, or in fact like any other hilly site.²⁷ According to this scenario Yosef Garfinkel may have his wish after all, if perhaps not in the manner he wished for.

Excursus. Two Notes on the Limestone Ark from Khirbet Qeiyafa and Its Lintel

1. The Material – Limestone

While terracotta arks or model shrines of the 2nd and 1st millennia are common in the southern Levant, the object in question (Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2013; Fig. 11 herein) is unique in both its material and design, certainly in the 10th

²⁷ Even while Qeiyafa at 2.3 hectares (Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: 25) is about half the size of that conjectured for Jerusalem in Finkelstein, Koch and Lipschits 2011: 8.

century – the Iron I–II transition. All the same, the occasional limestone variant may be encountered amongst more or less contemporary items otherwise known in fired clay. What comes to mind are the three limestone stands from Megiddo – the beautifully carved and painted one from Schumacher’s excavation (*Mutesellim* I: frontispiece) and two from Chicago’s Stratum V (*Megiddo* II: Pl. 254: 3–4). Likewise the limestone stand from Tel Amal (Levy and Edelstein 1972: Pl. 21). But the Qeiyafa ark is even more special in its early date, the Megiddo and Tel Amal items originating in later Iron IIA contexts.

2. The Lintel

The Qeiyafa ark stands out with its recessed doorframe and row of rectangular elements at the bottom of the lintel. The best parallel for the ark’s front, displaying both features, is the façade of a rock-cut tomb in Tamassos in Cyprus, yet the Qeiyafa ark is some three centuries older (Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2013: 148). The recessed frames have a long Near Eastern history, beginning in the 5th millennium (*ibid.*: 144–149), but where had the rectangular elements underneath the lintel originated? Rather than triglyphs (*loc. cit.*) the Qeiyafa device may be a forerunner of the Greek mutules, or else a misunderstood combination of both. Such mutules are found in Egypt since at least the Middle Kingdom – at the nomarchs’ tombs of Beni Hassan and Deir er-Rifeh (*Beni Hasan* I: 52 and Pl. 22 top left;²⁸ Pillet 1934: 66–70;²⁹ Badawy 1966: 133–134, 150–151; Shedid 1994: 5; *Figs. 12–13* herein). More specialist work on the Qeiyafa feature is needed, and on the option of an ultimately Egyptian prototype. If this is eventually confirmed, the *Fortleben* of the mutules after the Middle kingdom in their homeland and beyond, prior to the Classical period in Greece, will have to be examined. It should be remembered that other 2nd millennium Egyptian creations were emulated in the Middle and Late Bronze Age Levant and Cyprus, and their manufacture continued into the Iron Age.³⁰ An Iron Age adoption of the Qeiyafa trait directly from Third Intermediate Period Egypt may alternatively be investigated (compare Gubel 2008; 2009).³¹

²⁸ “Above the architrave and upheld by a narrow extension of the same pilasters there is a ledge of rock, somewhat resembling a cornice, the soffit of which is sculptured with false rafter-ends, laid flat but rounded below, and corresponding to the mutules of the Doric order” (*Beni Hasan* I: 52).

²⁹ “L’architrave représente le portant de bois, qui lie les colonnes entre elles, les triglyphes sont les abouts des poutres plafonnantes et l’extrémité des chevrons devient des mutules” (Pillet 1934: 66).

³⁰ Such was the case for instance with the Late Bronze Age antecedents of the gadrooned bowls in the Iron Age and Persian period. On the Iron IIA Kefar Veradim bowl and its Late Bronze prototypes see Alexandre 2002: 72; Sass 2005b: 38, 183. For a further Late Bronze specimen, from Alassa in Cyprus, see Hadjisavvas 2006: 452, no. 159.

³¹ In addition, there are mutule-like devices on South Arabian buildings, architectural models, steles and various objects of the 8th–7th centuries, perhaps 9th–7th (e.g. Simpson 2002: 55, 149, 162, 164, 169).

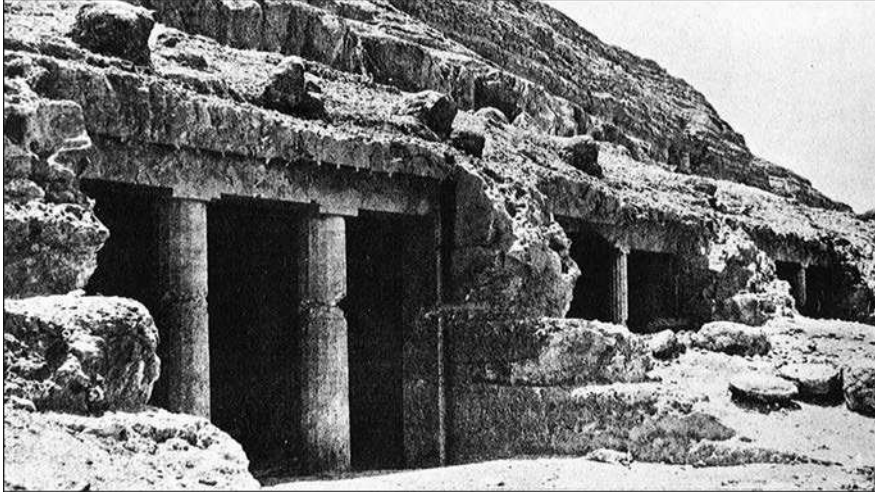


Fig. 12: Beni Hassan Tomb 3 (Badawy 1966: Pl. 14).

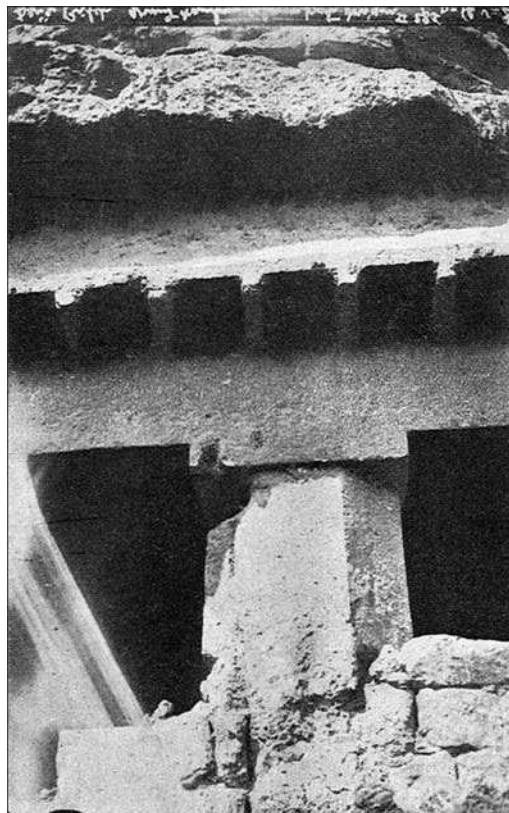


Fig. 13: Deir er-Rifeh tomb (Pillet 1938: 70).

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Khirbet Qeiyafa – A View from Tel Kinrot in the Eastern Lower Galilee

Stefan MÜNGER

This paper reviews selected aspects of the material culture unearthed at Khirbet Qeiyafa in the Shefelah through the lens of the Early Iron Age finds and findings from Tel Kinrot on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Though the two sites not only differ in geographic location, cultural affiliation, a slight chronological shift and many other aspects of their respective material culture, they nevertheless share common features¹ characteristic for the oscillating and yet to be further studied and explored transition period from the end of the Iron Age I to the Iron Age IIA at the turn from the 2nd to the first 1st millennium BCE.²

Early Iron Tel Kinrot – A Short Portrait

Tel Kinrot is a medium sized site located in the Eastern Lower Galilee. The small, two-staged Tell (*Fig. 1*),³ covering an area of slightly less than 1 hectare, is sitting atop a limestone foothill that quite steeply slopes down southeastwards towards the shoreline of the Sea of Galilee. However, the characteristic Tell-formation represents only the acropolis (or upper town) of the buried cities of ancient Kinneret. During the Middle Bronze Age IIB/Late Bronze I (ca. 1750–1400 BCE) and throughout the Iron Age IB (ca. 1050–950 BCE) the fortified settlements also covered the slopes of the hill, comprising a walled

¹ In the following, only a selection of characteristics shared by Khirbet Qeiyafa and Tel Kinrot are presented, which both do not concur with the respective chapters in archaeological schoolbooks. On the shrine models found at both sites, cf. Schroer, *infra*.

² On the absolute dating of the Iron Age I | II transition, cf. Sharon, Gilboa, Jull et al. 2007; Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2008; Finkelstein and Piasezky 2010; Finkelstein and Piasezky 2011; Mazar 2011; Toffolo, Arie, Martin et al. 2014; on the ¹⁴C dating of the Iron Age settlement at Khirbet Qeiyafa, cf. Finkelstein and Piasezky 2015; Garfinkel, Streit, Ganor et al. 2015; on Khirbet Qeiyafa's relative date and the characterization of its material culture, see esp. Singer-Avitz 2010, 2012 and 2016 (for counter arguments see Kang 2015). Note that the chronological implications drawn by Klingbeil based on some glyptic finds (2016: 279 and esp. note 7) are not solid since the material in question is – in relative chronological terms – either considerably earlier than Khirbet Qeiyafa, Stratum IV (Nos. 1–3) or comes from a mixed context below topsoil (No. 4). On the radiometric data of Early Iron Age Tel Kinrot, see below page 120 note 36.

³ The smaller Tell sitting atop of the western part of the actual Tell, thus the above designation as 'two-staged', might well have led to the later Arabic name *Tell el-'Orême*, meaning the 'mound of the (small) heap'.



Fig. 1: Aerial View on the 'Acropolis' of Tel Kinrot from the North (photograph by Pascal Partouche, Skyview Photography Ltd).

area of at least 7.2 hectares in size, of which ca. 5.7 hectares are accessible for archaeological exploration.⁴ The remaining southern area of the site is occupied by the Sapir Site, a pumping station operated by Mekorot, Israel's national water company.

1. *Abridged History of Exploration*

Early, rather modest excavations by German teams in 1909–1911 and 1932–1939 provided only limited archaeological data.⁵ The first systematic investigations from 1982–1985 were directed by Volkmar Fritz (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz) and resulted *inter alia* in the discovery of a walled fortress town dating to the Iron IIB period (Fritz 1990; but see also Winn and Yakar 1984). In this phase, excavations were undertaken mainly on the site's summit (Fig. 2; Areas A, B, C, D and E). In a second archaeological expedition, Fritz focused from 1994–2001 (now on behalf of the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Jerusalem and the Justus Liebig University Giessen, respectively) on the material remains on the southeastern slope, not only by exposing

⁴ It should be noted that the Early Bronze I-II habitation covered an area beyond the later fortification lines (Winn and Yakar 1984). The exact extension of these settlements is yet unknown.

⁵ For a summary and an interpretation see Fritz 1978.

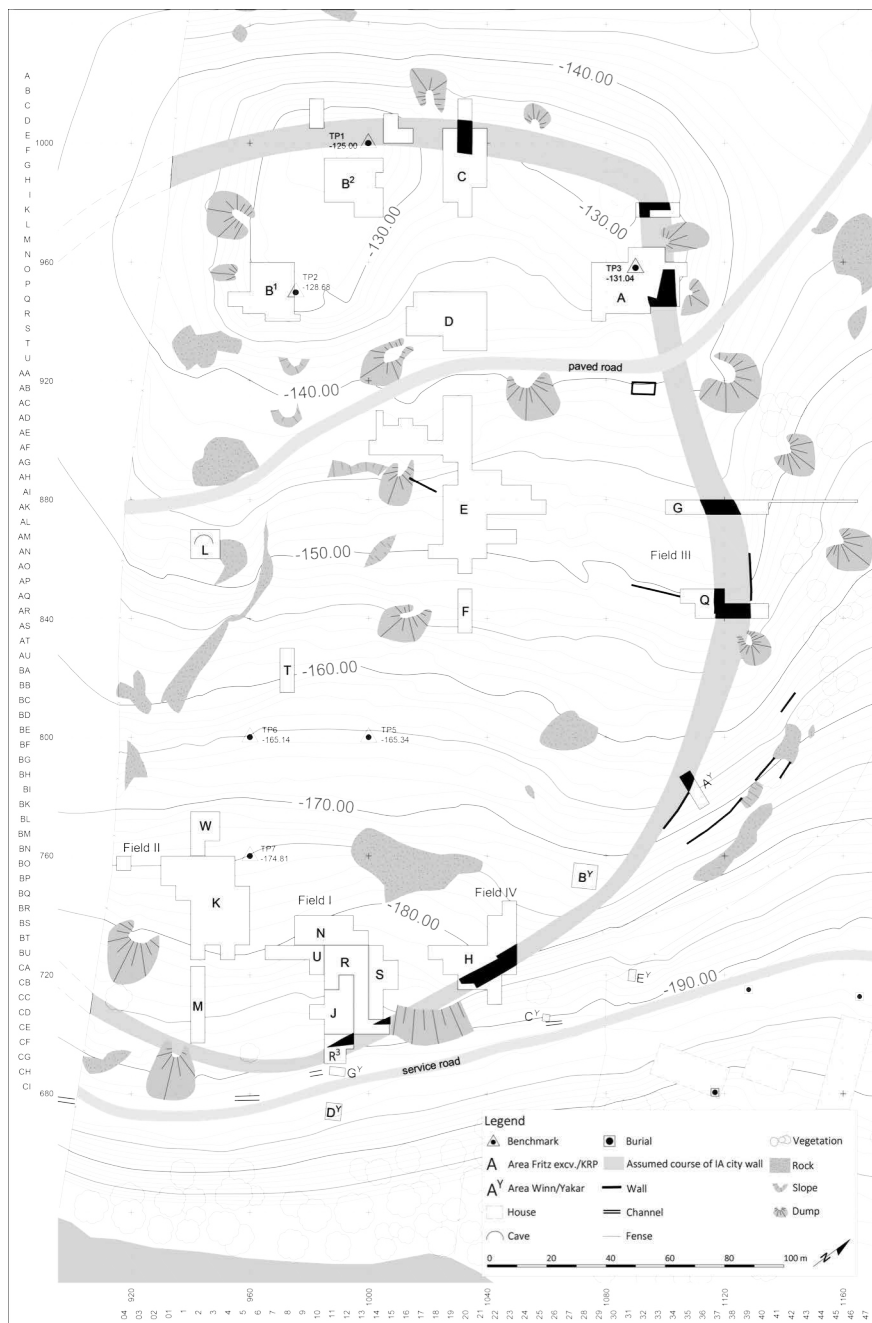


Fig. 2: General plan of excavations (compiled by Susanne Rutishauser).

large areas with exceptionally well preserved Iron Age I architecture, but also by penetrating into earlier settlement layers (*Fig. 2*; Areas F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, Q, R, S and T), which allowed a sound assessment of the settlement sequence present at the site (Fritz and Vieweger 1996; Fritz 1999; Fritz and Münger 2002). The thus far last campaigns at Tel Kinrot were undertaken by Kinneret Regional Project, an international consortium (by then) under the auspices of the Universities of Bern, Helsinki and Leiden and in cooperation with the University of Mainz. Fieldwork – directed by Juha Pakkala (Helsinki), Jürgen Zangenberg (Tilburg and later Leiden) and the present author – lasted so far for five seasons during the years 2003–2005 and 2007–2008.⁶ Future expeditions are planned.

	Excavated m ²	Seasons	% of accessible area ⁷	m ² per season
Fritz expedition 1982–1985	3550 m ²	4	7.0%	887.5 m ²
Fritz expedition 1994–2001	2780 m ²	7	5.5%	397.1 m ²
Fritz expedition (total)	6330 m ²	11	12.5%	575.5 m ²
Kinneret Regional Project	600 m ²	5	1.2%	120.0 m ²
<i>Tel Kinrot (Fritz + KRP)</i>	6930 m ²	16	13.7%	433.1 m ²
<i>Khirbet Qeiyafa</i> ⁸	5000 m ²	7	21.7%	642.8 m ²

Table 1: Exposed excavation areas at Tel Kinrot compared to Khirbet Qeiyafa.

While horizontal exposure of archaeological remains under the direction of Volkmar Fritz during the 1980ies was exceptionally high – to say the least, invasive fieldwork was reduced by more than half during his second series of excavations. During the campaigns of Kinneret Regional Project, horizontal exposure eventually decreased to less than 10% of what was previously unearthed by the first Fritz expedition. The reason for this was Kinneret Regional Project's aim to target mainly unexcavated baulks (mostly in Field I) and to avoid the opening of new excavation squares, unless crucial for the understanding of the Iron Age I and earlier settlement layers (see *Table 1*). The excavation of still standing baulks proved to be especially fruitful since it allowed reexamining and refining Fritz's stratigraphy without damaging further parts of the still buried rich material culture, especially the one of the Early Iron Age.⁹

⁶ During those five seasons, approximately 335 persons joined the excavations. The staff-/team-member ratio was ca. 1:2 in average.

⁷ I.e., within the walled perimeter of the Iron Age settlement(s) that is accessible for excavation.

⁸ Figures according to Garfinkel, *supra* pages 11–16; based on *Fig. 5 (ibid., page 10)* the excavated area at Khirbet Qeiyafa is more likely ca. 4500 m²; for a critical review of the applied field methods, cf. Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012: 39–41.

⁹ Note that of the ca. 990 pottery items – many of which were partly or fully restored – to be published in the forthcoming final reports covering the seasons 1994–2008, ca. 690

2. The ‘Prehistory’ of Early Iron Age Tel Kinrot – From the Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age

The first human activities attested at Tel Kinrot date to the (Pottery) Neolithic period (8300/5500–4500 BCE) represented by flint tools – some of which are comparable to the Pottery Neolithic Jericho IX industry – and ground stone artifacts found *ex situ* (Karge 1917: 172–177; Dr. Hamoudi Khalaily, *pers. comm.*). Apart from flint and stone tools, isolated pottery items dating to the Chalcolithic period (4500–3300 BCE) were found in pockets above virgin soil or as stray finds (esp. in Areas G and R³). The first coherent architecture is dated to the Early Bronze Age II (3000–2700 BCE) by small assemblages of restorable pottery (e.g., Fritz and Vieweger 1996: 94–96 with Fig. 5: 1–4, see also the stray finds published in Pakkala, Münger and Zangenberg 2004: 13 with Fig. 5).¹⁰ After a gap of several hundred years, settlement activity started again sometime during the late Middle Bronze Age IIB and continued throughout the Late Bronze Age I. During this time, the town is characterized by massive defense systems including a multi-phased glacis.¹¹ Only little is known about the city’s (domestic) architecture of this period and no coherent house plans have yet been unearthed (but see, e.g., Fritz and Münger 2002: 8–11). Nevertheless, Late Bronze Age Kinneret must have been a prominent Canaanite city-state since it is quite prominently mentioned in contemporary Egyptian sources (Münger 2013: 150 note 7). One of those sources is Papyrus Hermitage 1116A *verso* (pHerm 1116A), which dates from the time of Amenhotep II (1428–1397 BCE).¹²

This document is of peculiar interest, since it elucidates the political position ancient Kinneret at the close of the 15th c. BCE quite well. In the form of two receipts/lists, it mentions the provisioning of representatives from *Djahy*, i.e. the region of Palestine (and adjacent areas) with beer and corn.¹³ Apart from *k-n-n-r-t*¹⁴ (Kinneret), the envoys are said to come from ‘-[s]-k-r-n (Ashkelon)¹⁵ in the Southern coastal plain, from *m-k-t* (Megiddo),¹⁶ [š]-m-r-n (Shimron/Shim’on [i.e.

come from the Fritz expedition and ca. 300 were retrieved by Kinneret Regional Project. These figures are highly disproportionate *vis-à-vis* the amount of excavated square meters exposed by the respective excavation teams. Also, work on the micro-stratigraphy of the Early Iron Age remains profited greatly of the much slower excavation pace of Kinneret Regional Project.

¹⁰ The otherwise attested Early Bronze Age I wares from the end of the 4th millennium BCE found *ex situ* could not yet be associated with architectural units.

¹¹ Cf. Fritz 1999: 95–98; Fritz and Münger 2002: 8–11.

¹² Possibly from his 19th or 20th regnal year, cf. der Manuelian 1987: 12–15 with earlier literature.

¹³ For a general overview cf. Amir 1963; Epstein 1963; Weippert 2010: 122–124.

¹⁴ This and the following transliterations are based on Epstein 1963: 50.

¹⁵ Tell el-Hadra; the site is mentioned in EA 287, 320–322, 370; cf. Moran 1992: 327–330.350–351.367.

¹⁶ Tell el-Mutesellim in the Jezreel valley; the site is mentioned in EA 234, 242–245; cf. Moran 1992: 292–300.

Shamkhuna)¹⁷ and *[t]^e-n-k* (Ta'anach)¹⁸ in the Jezreel valley, from *'-k-s-p* (Achshaph),¹⁹ in the Acco plain, from *[m]-š-i-r* (Mishal)²⁰ in the Haifa bay and from *h-[d]-r* (Hazor) in the Huleh valley²¹. Sites from Northern Transjordan mentioned are *š-r-n* (Sharon, i.e. Sharuna) located somewhere in the Southern Bashan²² and *h-t-m* (Ham?)²³ in Gilead. The last site mentioned, *t-n-n* (Teneni/Tenni), should be searched somewhere in Northern Palestine or in Southern Syria.²⁴ Though the purpose of the travel of these noble men is not mentioned, it is almost certain that they were bringing tribute to royal estate.²⁵ As they are explicitly called *maryannu* (i.e. members of a chariot-warrior aristocracy²⁶), one must assume that they had a certain standing even at the Egyptian court and were considered as honorable representatives of important Canaanite city-states.

The geographical scope of pHerm 1116A is evident. All envoys came from towns or cities located in Northern Palestine (except for the representative of Ashkelon, who might have joined the party along the way) and although some of the sites are located quite close to each other, there is no doubt that each envoy represented his own political entity located in the northern plains of Cis- and Transjordan. Thus, Kinneret was firmly embedded in a socio-political landscape of city-states that dotted the political map of Palestine under the Egyptian hegemony. Merely three generations later, this changed dramatically.

Based on archaeological evidence, ancient Kinneret must have been deserted sometime at the very beginning of the 14th c. BCE, i.e. the first decades of the Late Bronze Age II period, since ceramic hallmarks, like, e.g., imported Mycenaean IIIA-B ceramics or Cypriot products, such as Base-ring II, hand-made *Bucchero* or Knife-shaved wares are lacking completely in the material record.²⁷ This corresponds well to the silence about ancient Kinneret in the

¹⁷ Tel Shimron in the Jezreel valley; the site is mentioned in EA 225; cf. Moran 1992: 288. According to petrographic analysis, this letter by Šum-Adda was sent from the Egyptian administrative center at Beth-Shean and not from Shimron/Shim'on itself; thus the localization of this site cannot be petrographically confirmed, cf. Goren, Finkelstein and Na'aman 2004: 233–237 with earlier literature.

¹⁸ Tell Ta'annēk in the Jezreel valley; the site is mentioned in EA 248; cf. Moran 1992: 301–302.

¹⁹ Tell Keisan in the Acco plain; the site is mentioned in EA 366–367; cf. Moran 1992: 364–365. EA 223 (cf. Moran 1992: 287) possibly also originated from this site, cf. Goren et al. 2004: 231–233.

²⁰ Tell en-Naḥl; the site is not mentioned in the el-Amarna correspondence.

²¹ Tell el-Qedah; the site is mentioned in EA 148, 227–228 and 364, cf. Moran 1992: 288–290.362.

²² The localization of Sharuna, mentioned in EA 241 (cf. Moran 1992: 296), in the Bashan area is corroborated by petrographic evidence, cf. Goren et al. 2004: 220–225.

²³ Tell Ham; for a short discussion on this localization cf. Epstein 1963: 54–55 with earlier literature.

²⁴ See the discussion in Na'aman 2005: 161–162; Teneni/Tenni is mentioned in EA 260; cf. Moran 1992: 311.

²⁵ Cf., e.g., Na'aman 2005: 161 or Weippert 2010: 122.

²⁶ For a short characterization cf. Lemche 1991: 43–44 and Wilhelm 1990; on the status of the *maryannu* in Ugarit see Heltzer 1982: 111–115.

²⁷ Fritz and Münger 2002: 10–11. One of the latest imports within the Late Bronze Age ceramic assemblage is a so-called 'Black Lustrous Wheel Made Ware' juglet found on a

Amarna correspondence,²⁸ where most of the city-states listed in pHerm 1116 are still mentioned.²⁹

Three centuries later – towards the middle years of the 11th c. BCE – the site was resettled and eventually grew to become one of the most important urban centers in the greater region at the close of the 2nd millennium BCE. During this period, former nearby major centers like Kamid el-Loz (ancient Kumidi) in the Beqaa valley or Hazor in the Hula valley to the north,³⁰ Tel Yin'am (Biblical Jabneel) or Tel Rekhesh, i.e. Anaharath prominently mentioned in some Egyptian documents,³¹ in the Lower Galilee to the south,³² or Tell 'Ashtarath (ancient Ashtarot) in the Bashan to the east,³³ long had lost their power and fell – in some cases – almost into inexistence.³⁴

3. Tel Kinrot During the Early Iron Age

On this background, the rise of such a large settlement like Tel Kinrot, and its satellite Tel Hadar on the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee,³⁵ sometime

floor belonging to Stratum VII in Area H (for this group see Yannai, Gorzalczy and Peilstöcker 2003: 110 with Fig. 3.3; Yannai 2007; Gorzalczy and Yannai 2007). It should be noted that this ware normally predates the import of Cypriot Base Ring I ceramics, which have not been identified at Tel Kinrot yet (Yannai 2007: 317).

²⁸ The toponym *knrt* appearing in the contemporary 'Aqhatu legend (KTU 1.19:III:41) refers to the general region and not to the site itself (Münger 2013: 150 with further literature).

²⁹ See notes 15–23 above. Note, however, the scarab bearing the horizontal inscription *hmt nswt Tjj* 'Royal consort Tiye' that was found on the surface at Tel Kinrot (Mader 1930: Pl. 4:4; Hübner 1986: 264, Fig. 1; Lalkin 2008: Pl. 43:753; for parallels cf. Keel 2010: 420–421, Der el-Balah No. 47 with further literature). Tiye was the wife of Amenhotep III (1390–1353 BCE), who lived until after the 8th regnal year of her son Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten (1353–1336 BCE; cf. Schmitz 1986: 305). Since no contemporary finds other than this scarab have been identified yet at Tel Kinrot, one must assume that the stamp-seal amulet has been deposited at the site at a considerably later time.

³⁰ For the rather modest Early Iron Age remains of the unwalled settlement at Kamid el-Loz, cf., e.g., Heinz, Kulemann-Ossen, Linke et al. 2006: 88–90; Heinz 2009: 117; Heinz 2010: 28–72 (passim); for Hazor in the Iron Age I, cf., e.g., Ben-Ami 2001; Ben-Ami 2006; Ben-Ami and Ben-Tor 2012.

³¹ Na'aman 2005: 165.

³² For Tel Yin'am cf., e.g., Liebowitz 1993; Liebowitz 1997; Liebowitz 2003; for Tel Rekhesh, cf., e.g., Hasegawa 2010; Paz, Okita, Tsukimoto et al. 2010.

³³ Abou-Assaf 1968; Abou-Assaf 1969.

³⁴ Note that the only site in the aforementioned list, which grew during the Iron Age I is Tel Rekhesh. The site's current excavators note: "Although some of the structures of Iron Age I Tel Rekhesh may be somewhat smaller than the LB structures, it nevertheless appears that occupation at the site reached its zenith during the latter period, when it spread throughout the upper mound and 'spilled over' on the lower terrace, as may be observed in the nature of buildings there, which are both residential and public in nature." (Paz et al. 2010: 38).

³⁵ Cf., e.g., Kochavi 1998: 29; Fritz 2003: 18–19; Münger, Zangenberg and Pakkala 2011: 88.

after the collapse of the Late Bronze Age polities, must be viewed as asynchronous and calls for special attention. Although the Early Iron Age settlement at Tel Kinrot probably did not last more than a century (ca. 1050–950 BCE),³⁶ this settlement phase certainly marks one of the most important heydays of the site, which never recovered to its former *grandeur* in the later periods.

The Early Iron Age town at Tel Kinrot stands out from most other contemporary settlements in various aspects, such as the remarkably high degree of town-planning (see below) or the internal socio-economic structure with various small-scale industries, like olive oil production, tanning or milling and baking beyond regular household needs. Also, the quality of construction and size of the individual buildings is outstanding. These large domestic units or complexes, that were organized as *insulae* within the city, follow building traditions that most probably had their origins within the Syrian realm (Münger 2013: 151–154). At times, they easily could have housed up to 35 adults, enough space for an extended family, including slaves and servants (*Fig. 3*). As exemplified by ‘Complex 1’ in Field I in the lower most part of the southeastern slope, such large structures were clearly pre-planned and constructed in one building operation. On the other hand, there is also evidence for a continuous extension of a previously defined building plot. According to B. Schöneweiß-Mehring (Kinneret Regional Project’s advisor in structural engineering), Complex 4 in Field II, built between two massive terraces, shows at least 6 constructional phases that document not only an increase in population but also impressively mirror the densification of the building ground in the settlement development during the main phase of the Early Iron Age horizon at Tel Kinrot (*Fig. 4*).

The material culture that parallels the famous Megiddo Stratum VIA horizon is a vivid blend of indigenous Canaanite traditions (Fritz 2000) with various cultural influences from neighboring regions (Münger, Zangenberg and Pakkala 2011), of which the Northern traditions are most outstanding (Münger

³⁶ The founding phase of Early Iron Age Kinneret (Stratum VI) is not yet fully established, since only one ¹⁴C-date of an olive pit retrieved from this phase is available. It places the initial stages of the Iron Age I settlement in the middle years of the 11th century BCE (Fritz and Münger 2002: 12). Radiometric dating of organic material from bricks used to build a large complex of the main phase of the Early Iron Age horizon (Stratum V) suggests a construction date in the second half of the 11th c. BCE (Dr. Elisabetta Boaretto, *pers. comm.*). Unfortunately, no ¹⁴C-dates are available for its terminal phase. However, a scarab of the late 21st/early 22nd Egyptian dynasty found on a floor of that same building suggests a final date around 980/960 BCE (Münger 2007: 93–95 No. 8). After the devastation of the main Iron Age IB settlement the site was re-settled for a brief duration only. Since – apart from minute changes in cooking wares – the material culture is the same as the previous one. This ‘squatter habitation’ thus cannot have lasted for long. Therefore, a timeframe for Early Iron Age Tel Kinrot from ca. 1050 to ca. 950 BCE is suggested.

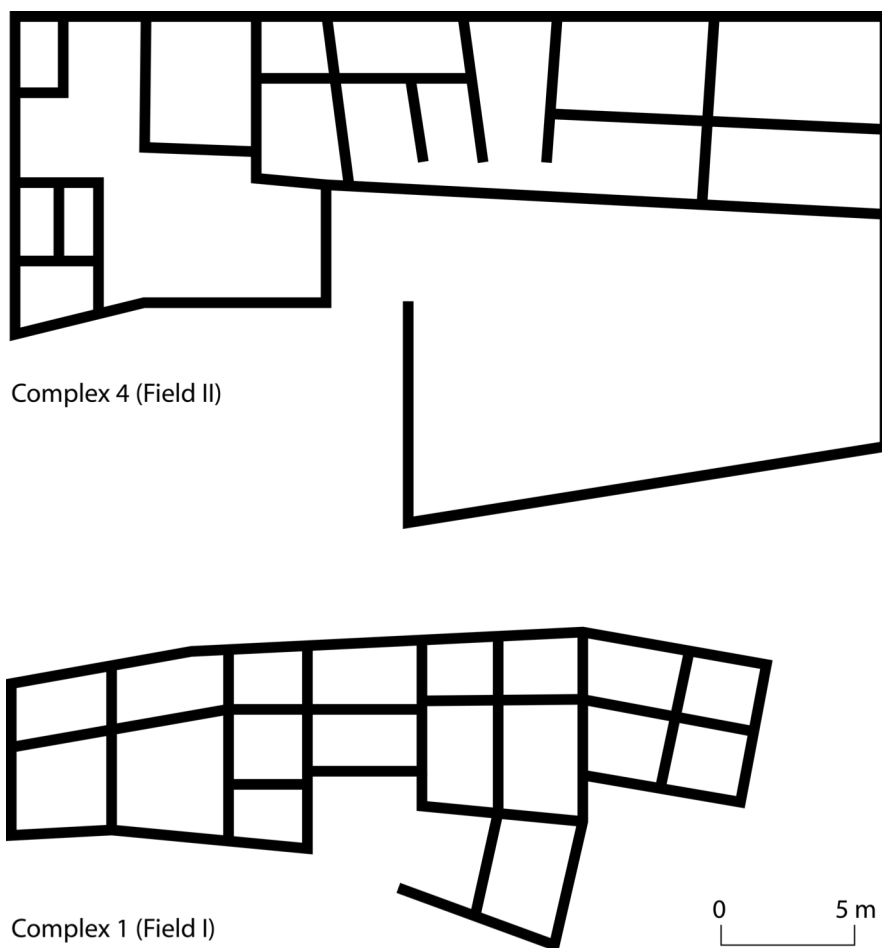


Fig. 3: Schematic plan of Complexes 1 and 4 (by Bärbel Schöneweiß-Mehring, Vöhl-Obernburg).

2013). They are traceable in architectural styles (see above), locally produced ceramics with a morphology foreign to the contemporary pottery corpus of Cis- and Transjordan (Münger 2005: 86–87; Münger 2013: 154–161), cultic objects (Nissinen and Münger 2009; Berkheij-Dol 2012) or mortuary practices (Münger 2012; Münger 2013: 161–163). On the other hand, economic ties with the early Phoenician culture were seemingly important as well, as evidenced by the significant amount of a variety of small imported containers, such as, e.g., the typical bichrome flasks and jugs and others (Fritz 1998: Fig. 11; Pakkala et al. 2004: Fig. 11,2; Namdar, Gilboa, Neumann et al. 2013). Finally, supra-regional exchange of goods is, e.g., attested by noteworthy amounts of *Lates niloticus* (Nile perch; Thomsen 2011; Thomsen in Münger et al. 2011: 79),

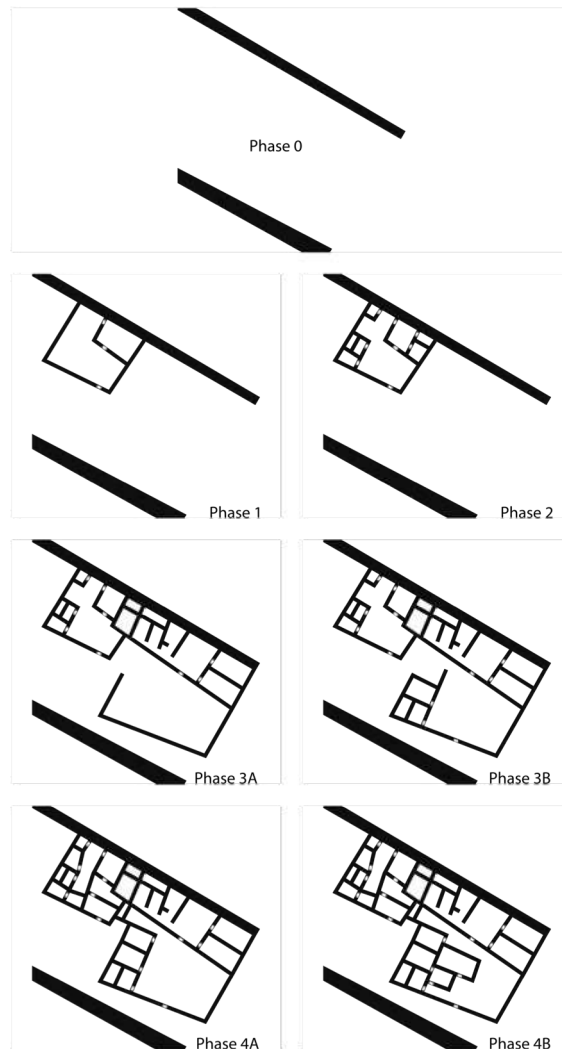


Fig. 4: The development of Complex 4 (by Bärbel Schöneweiß-Mehring, Vöhl-Obernburg).

stamp-seal amulets (Münger 2007) and other Egyptian artifacts (e.g., Fritz and Münger 2002: 19 with Fig. 10,4) or some rare items alluding to the ‘Philistine’ material culture (Dietrich and Münger 2001: 59 with Fig. 3; Dietrich and Münger 2003: 44; Fassbeck, Münger and Röhl 2003: 47–49; Fassbeck 2008).

In sum, it is evident that ancient Kinneret at the dawn of the 1st millennium BCE reflects a highly organized and complex society with broad interregional socio-economic ties that dominated at times the region on the Sea of Galilee,

independent of the by then incipient if not even embryonic kingdoms and territorial entities in the Southern Levant.

Khirbet Qeiyafa Through the Lens of Early Iron Age Tel Kinrot

Obviously, comparing Tel Kinrot with Khirbet Qeiyafa is somewhat similar to comparing apples to oranges. Their regional setting, territorial association of whatever nature or socio-economic organization is very different to each other. In the following, however, some selected features of Khirbet Qeiyafa, Stratum IV – highlighted by its excavator Yossi Garfinkel (*supra*) – shall briefly be reviewed in light of the material culture of the almost contemporary site of Tel Kinrot.

4. Settlement Layout and Fortifications

Like Tel Kinrot, Khirbet Qeiyafa was fortified, which is an unusual feature during the late Iron Age IB and early Iron Age IIA. Only a few walled settlements are known from that period, some of which were fortified with a solid wall – like the northern sites of Tel Kinrot, Tel Hadar, the Philistine cities in the Southern coastal plain or Tell el-Fukhar in Jordan (Münger 2013: 151) – while others – like Khirbet Qeiyafa, Khirbet ed-Dawwara, Tell en-Naṣbe or Tell el-‘Umeiri and other sites on the Transjordanian Plateau (Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012: 42–43) – had a casemate(-like) defense wall. Besides the very different constructional features of the fortifications of Tel Kinrot and Khirbet Qeiyafa, respectively, it should be noted that unlike at Tel Kinrot, Khirbet Qeiyafa’s defense system is not founded on an earlier city wall, as suggested by Rami Arav (2011: 93–94; for the counter-arguments of the excavators, cf. Garfinkel, Kreimerman and Zilberg 2016: 122). Furthermore, it is obvious that also at Khirbet Qeiyafa a central authority of whatever nature must have initiated the well planned layout of the settlement’s defense system that predetermined the arrangement and organization of its internal layout, including the arrangement of the gates where the openings of casemates change their position (Garfinkel, *supra* 10 with Fig. 5). However, whether this was a regional power, as suggested by Yossi Garfinkel (*supra* page 44–47) cannot be determined by the very fact that Qeiyafa’s defense system was pre-planned and well organized. As exemplified by Tel Kinrot it is well conceivable that also an independent local elite was able to conduct such highly organized and extensive building operations.

As for the organization of the walled settlement area, there are obviously great differences between Khirbet Qeiyafa and Tel Kinrot. While the former follows the concept of a well structured fortification system with a peripheral

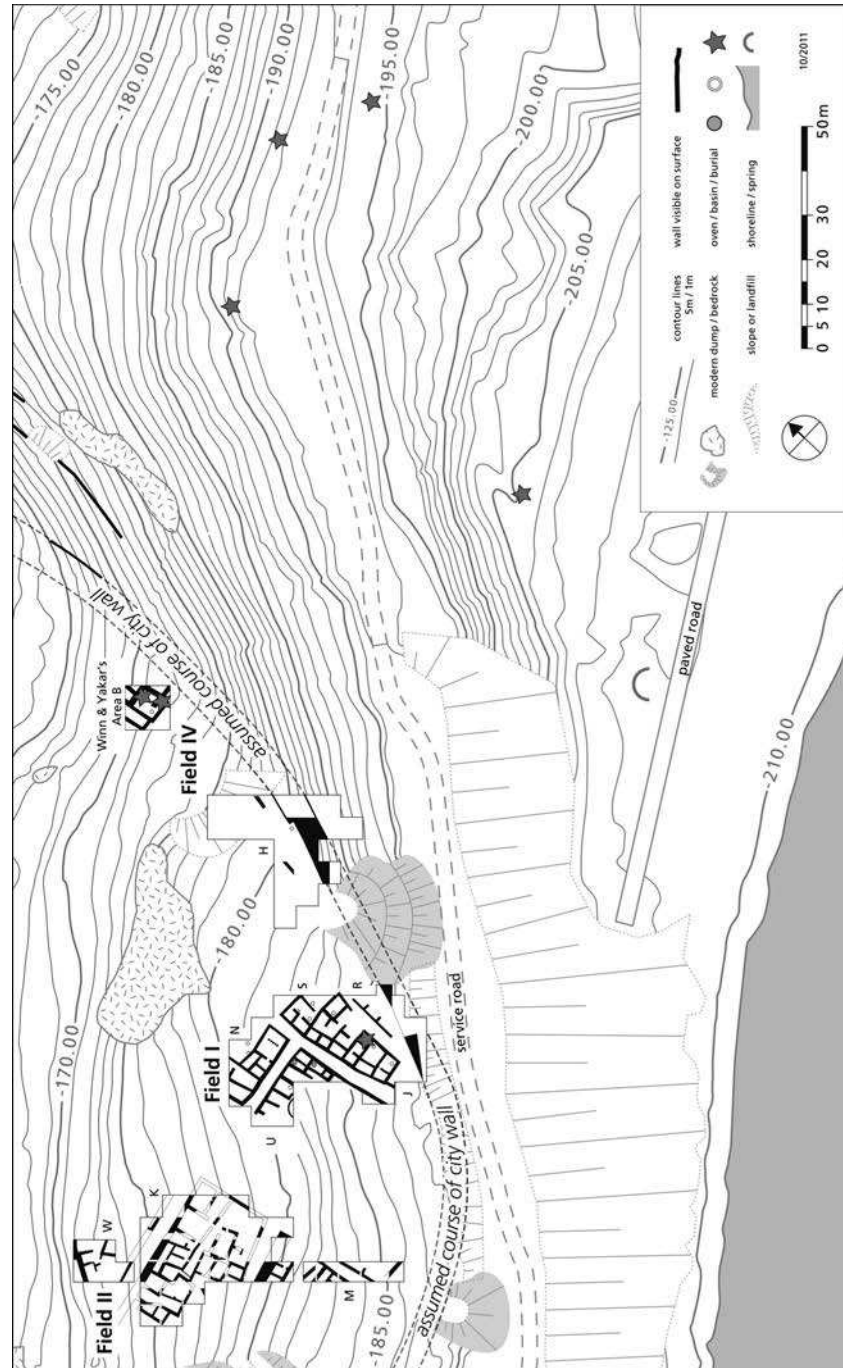


Fig. 5: The Lower City at Tel Kinrot, Stratum V (Münger 2013: Fig. 3).



Fig. 6: 3D reconstruction of Complex I, direction northwest (artwork by Christa Lennert, Mainz).

belt of abutting, non-standardized houses – a model that may well be rooted in the so-called ‘enclosed settlement’ which developed during the Iron Age I, e.g., in the Beersheba Valley (Herzog 1983; Herzog 1994) but also occurs at northern sites like ‘Izbit Šartah, Stratum III and other places (Finkelstein 1988: 238–263) –, the latter shows a much higher degree of town planning, including massive terrace walls across several plots to allow even building ground or an orthogonal street system, sometimes with embedded channels (*Fig. 5*).

5. Domestic Houses

In stark contrast to the deliberate and uniform arrangement of the casemates are the layouts of the abutting houses at Khirbet Qeiyafa. Their ground plan is irregular and does not follow common standards, like, e.g., at the slightly later Judahite site of Beersheba, Stratum II and even more so at Tell es-Sa‘idiyeh in the Jordan Rift valley (Herzog 1997: Fig. 5.31 and 5.24; but see, e.g., Beit Mirsim, Stratum A, *ibid.* Fig. 5.29). Judged from the published plans (e.g., Garfinkel, *supra* Fig. 29, Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel 2014: Figs. 6.26, 7.50 or 8.68), the rather modest width (and quality) of the walls (except the outer [casemate] walls) suggest that the buildings were only one-storied, since the single-rowed stone foundations would not have been stable enough for the

addition of an upper story.³⁷ According to the evidence from Area C at Khirbet Qeiyafa (Garfinkel, *supra* Fig. 17) the floor plan area of the individual dwelling compounds is between 180 and 330 m², which corresponds to the size of similar domestic units, e.g., at Khirbet Raddana north of modern Ramallah (Lederman 1999). Such a size of the ground plan is considered suitable for the accommodation of an extended or multiple families (Stager 1985: 18–23; note however that Stager assumed second stories in order to provide enough living space *per capita*). At Tel Kinrot, building complexes were of similar size (Complex 1; ca. 250 m²) and larger (Complex 4; ca. 500 m²). They were, however, originally certainly two-storied and built along an akin base plan (Münger 2013: 153–154). Also, their inner organization followed a clearer structural model than those of Khirbet Qeiyafa, with sophisticated ground floor and rooftop access ways (Fig. 6).

6. Gates

To date, no entryways to the walled city have been exposed at Tel Kinrot. However, a deep depression north of Area G (see Fig. 2) hints at a larger gate complex that might have served as main access point to the Iron Age I city. If and how many other openings in the city wall of ancient Kinneret – such as secondary gates or posterns for pedestrian traffic – existed that facilitated at times, e.g., access to the spring of 'Ain et-Tine close to the foot of the Tell, the anchoring places on the lake shore, industrial areas *extra muros* or nearby farmlands,³⁸ is beyond present knowledge.³⁹ If indeed such passage ways along the fortification line – which assumedly measured more than 1025 m – existed, they must have been narrow (and thus easier to block) and very sparse, since the economic investment for guards and patrols certainly would have been unreasonably higher than the actual profit of direct access ways to the outside of the city.⁴⁰ The same must also apply for the situation at Khirbet Qeiyafa. Are two simultaneously used, almost identical gates (Garfinkel, *supra* Figs. 13 and 15) located at a linear distance of only 140 meters from each other (*ibid.*, Fig. 5) economically really reasonable? Although the two gates almost perfectly fit in the layout and orientation of the casemate rooms,⁴¹ which predefined the

³⁷ Obviously the large building in Area A is built in a completely different quality and technique, see Garfinkel, *supra* Fig. 6 and page 23.

³⁸ For the finds and findings in the vicinity of Tel Kinrot, cf., e.g., Fritz 1978: *passim*; Stepanski 2000.

³⁹ A possible postern dating to the MBIIB/LB I was found in area Q, where the city wall is 12 m wide. It was, however, blocked already in a later phase of this settlement layer (Dietrich, Knauf and Münger 1998). For contemporary posterns, see, e.g., Burke 2008: 71.

⁴⁰ Needless to say that also the narrowest postern in a broad city wall always was a security risk, especially in times of war and turmoil.

⁴¹ Note that the position of the opening of the casemates not only changes at the gates but also within the pillared building in Area F (Garfinkel, *supra* page 23 with Figs. 5–6); it

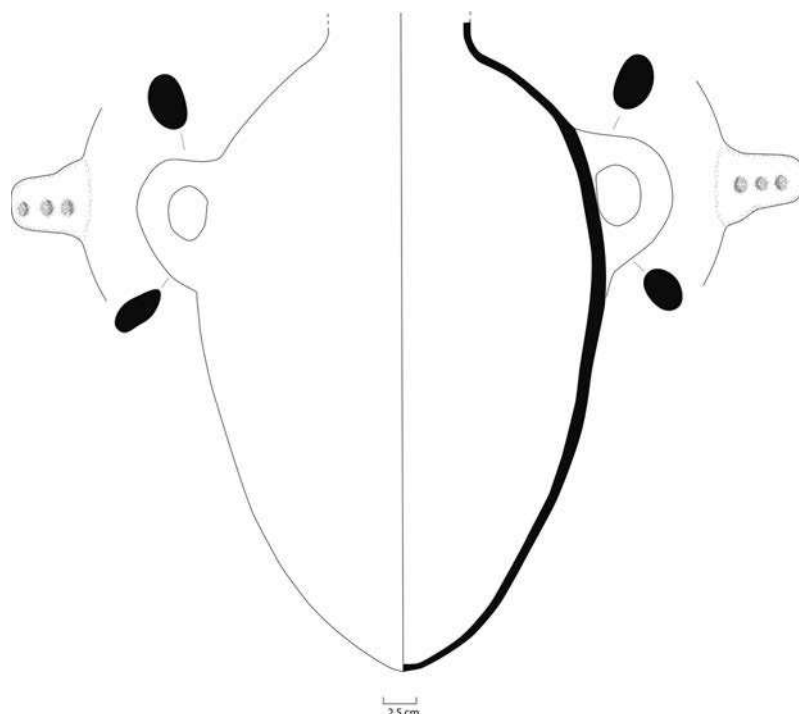


Fig. 7: Storage jar with potter's marks from main phase of the early Iron Age horizon at Tel Kinrot (drawing by Christa Lennert, Mainz).

settlement layout, one still wonders if they indeed represent the same archaeological (sub)phase.⁴² It is not improbable that one of them was only built at a later stage during the life span of Stratum IV at Khirbet Qeiyafa, while the other one went out of use for unknown reasons. This is even more probable, since two simultaneously used gates at a site of only 2.3 hectares and with a topography like the one at Khirbet Qeiyafa are not at all imperative.

7. *Marked Pots or Potter's Marks*

Besides urban planning, dietary patterns, epigraphic and linguistic peculiarities and other 'indicators' for Khirbet Qeiyafa as being Judahite, Yossi Garfinkel (*supra* page 43) also mentions nearly seven hundred impressed jar handles, which – according to him – are a "typical Judean administrative device" (*ibid.*).

is not very likely that also this building was already part of the original town plan and that its ground plan was anticipated by the builders of the defense system, who would have rearranged the casemates intentionally in advance.

⁴² Even without necessarily questioning the gates' general date and stratigraphic attribution, cf. Finkelstein and Fantalkin 2012: 44–46.

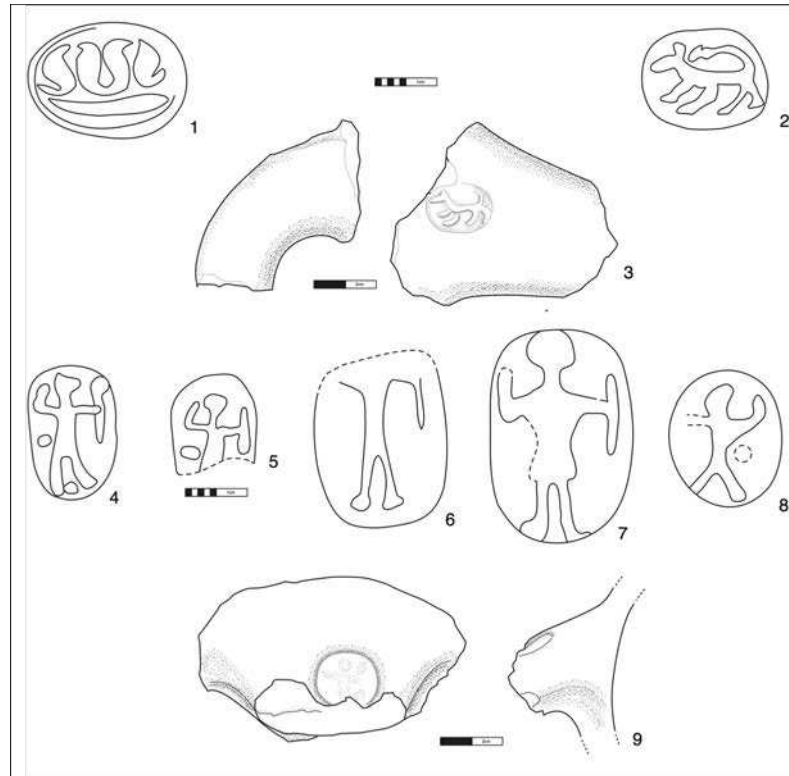


Fig. 8: Stamped seal-impressions on jar handles from Tel Kinrot (Münger 2008: Fig. 1).

This idea has recently been elaborated by Kang and Garfinkel (2015), who see a “stylistic continuity between the Khirbet Qeiyafa vessels [with finger impressed handles, SM] and the LMLK jars” (*ibid.* page 194) and state “that finger-impressed jars fulfilled an administrative function in the Iron Age IIA ... [and that they, SM] .. believe that this role was superseded by the advent of the seal-impressed LMLK jar in the Iron Age IIB” (*ibid.* page 201).

This interpretation is not easily comprehensible. Not only because it contrasts the *opinio communis* that pre-firing marks – i.e. finger impressions or incisions – point to utilitarian mechanisms in the manufacturing process,⁴³ but also because pre-firing marks do co-exist together with more sophisticated markings such as seal-impressions. At Tel Kinrot, for example, single, double and even triple (*Fig. 7*) finger-impressions are randomly found on Early Iron Age storage jars. Parallel to those, a considerable amount of sealed jar handles has been unearthed in the same contexts, some of which were made with the

⁴³ In contrast incisions on vessels after their firing usually connote private ownership or ad hoc labeling of contents or the like; see Wood 1990: 45–48; London 1991: 397–403; Shoham 2000: 109–110; Hirschfeld 2008 and others.

same seal while others share the same motif but originate from different stamp-seal amulets (Münger 2009; see also *Fig. 8*). Due to the more complex production process that fairly alludes to exclusivity and possibly to a high social status, it is probable that such impressions in fact indicated ownership and point to some sort of organized economic system, where they probably were part of an administrated distribution of goods.⁴⁴ In contrast, in the present author's opinion the simple and unpretentious finger-impressions on jar handles should be viewed as potters's marks indicating the pooling of equipment – e.g., kilns – during the production process.

The very high number of finger-impressed jar handles at Khirbet Qeiyafa can easily be interpreted in the same way and does in no way necessarily need to lead to the conclusion that those finger impressions “point to a centralized administration in early Iron Age IIA Judah” (Kang and Garfinkel 2015: 202). If they were ‘administrative’ indeed, such a simplistic system would certainly only have worked on a local basis in a society under the direct rule of a local chief or small elite.

Conclusion

Khirbet Qeiyafa with its splendid and significant finds and findings is a very important site for the study of the early Iron Age IIA material culture and its main excavator, Yossi Garfinkel, should be praised for the very timely publication of the archaeological data. However, Khirbet Qeiyafa does not stand alone in the archaeological landscape and its material culture must continuously be reflected and relativized by evidence from other sites that equally contribute to the growing mosaic of information about the evolving (and interacting) cultures at the turn of the 2nd to the 1st millennium BCE in the Southern Levant.

Acknowledgements

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⁴⁴ For further examples see Münger 2009: 125 with note 54.

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The Iconography of the Shrine Models of Khirbet Qeiyafa

Silvia SCHROER

Introduction

I had the pleasure of taking part in the excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa as a volunteer over three seasons, each time for two weeks.¹ Among the exceptionally spectacular finds were two temple models, one made of limestone, the other of clay, found at the end of the 2011 excavation season. By now an article and a book have been published by Yossi Garfinkel and Madeleine Mumcuoglu, in which particularly the extraordinary limestone model with its remarkable front gate decoration is analyzed in its iconographic context and also related to the Hebrew texts in 1 Kings that describe the palace and temple of Solomon (Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2013; Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2015). In my article I will refer to these publications and also to Yossi Garfinkel's discussion in this volume. Only recently and after the final redaction of the present article an extensive study by Raz Kletter (Kletter 2015: 28–84) concerning an interesting shrine model from Yavneh and the typology and iconography of shrine models came to my knowledge. Unfortunately it was no longer possible to take into account all of Kletter's material or to enter into a detailed discussion, but some footnotes and remarks have been added and the number of illustrations was reduced in view of Kletter's thorough data collection.²

In this contribution the clay temple model will be analyzed in more detail. It is my thesis, which I may anticipate at this point, that small shrine models in the Levant and Cyprus were mostly associated with goddesses and their cult. I will support this conclusion through reference to the iconographic traditions. If no figurine is found in a shrine with an open door, it certainly does not mean that the shrine would have been empty. A small clay figurine or bronze image could easily have been lost. The temple façade and its decoration often give

¹ I had the opportunity to publish a 5th/4th century Phoenician seal found at the site together with Patrick Wyssmann in the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* (Schroer and Wyssmann 2012). The English version of this article will appear in the forthcoming excavation report. The seal portrays a goddess on a lion, maybe Sekhmet, who is regularly shown with a lion's head. – On three locally made Early Iron Age seals found in Stratum IV at Khirbet Qeiyafa see now also Schroer 2016.

² There has been an increasing number of publications on shrine models, and not all of them are referred to in this contribution, but see the standard publications by Bretschneider 1991; Muller 2001 and 2002; Katz 2006.

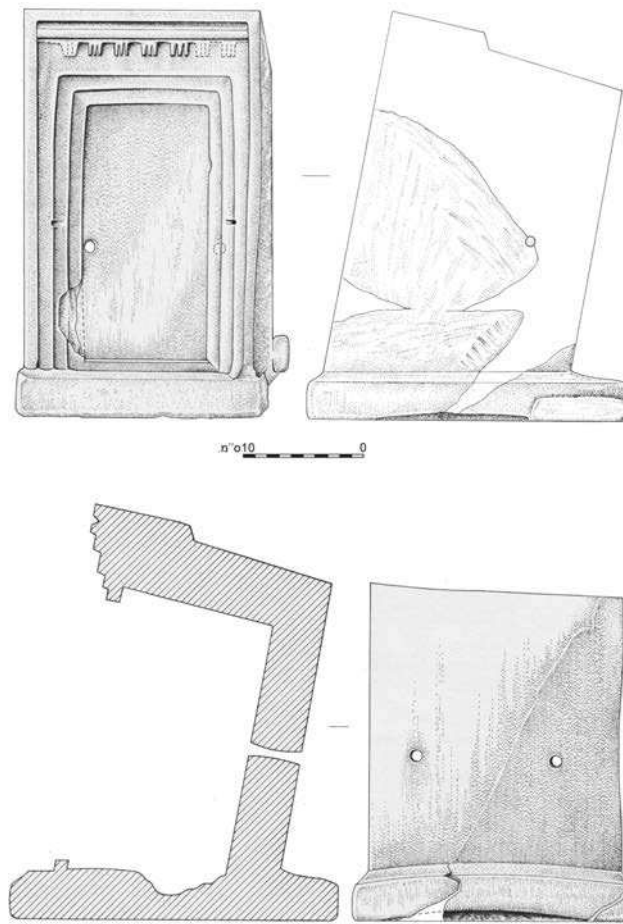


Fig. 1

iconographic clues that a shrine is dedicated to a goddess. Even if they are represented in model form, they could have served cultic functions similar to that of small chapels. The two shrine models were found not far apart in rooms for which cultic activity has been confirmed (see Garfinkel in this volume, page 35). I am quite sure that the small shrine made out of clay from Khirbet Qeiyafa was associated with a goddess cult. But first a few remarks about the limestone model.

The Limestone Shrine

The shrine model has a height of 35 cm, a width of 21 cm and a depth of 26 cm (*Fig. 1*; Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2015: 53). It was broken and several pieces

are missing, but the reconstruction is certain and uncontested. It was made out of one single limestone block. Traces of red paint have been preserved on the limestone walls. There are two holes, or drilled perforations, in the rear wall, quite some distance below mid-height. I will discuss their function in more detail. In the doorframe are small holes at about mid-height, which served to attach a now missing, small door, probably made out of wood. The model is truly unique. Exceptional for a shrine model is its material – limestone, exceptional are the recessed, and thereby staggered, doorframes, exceptional is the decorated frieze above the door with its quadratic elements – probably seven originally, which Garfinkel has identified as triglyphs as they are known from the Doric architecture of Greece.

Recessed doorframes not only indicate a luxurious architectural style, but also create the perception of depth in a building, e.g., a temple or palace with several consecutive rooms. The spatial depth of the visible room is emphasized. In the case of a temple the presence of the deity in the temple is moved towards the back, so that the deity appears further distant from the observer. A palace window with recessed frames makes the person in the window appear close and at the same time situated far within the building, and therefore distant. Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu have drawn together a considerable number of examples of Mesopotamian depictions reaching back to the 3rd and 2nd millennium, in which recessed doorframes indicate temple architecture. Egyptian depictions from the Old Kingdom could be added to these, e.g., the serekh vignettes,³ which indicate palace façades, or the Hathor capitals known from Dynasty VI onwards that show the uraeus in a portal with recessed frames (*Fig. 2*; Prisse d'Avennes 1878: Taf. 38). Surprisingly, recessed doorframes are almost unknown from the late 2nd or early 1st millennia in Palestine/Israel or Syria, neither as a model (for one exception, see below) nor as an image. Only a stele from Hala Sultan Tekke, in the region of Larnaca, which appears to show a door and above it two windows of a temple or palace, is dated, but not with certainty, to the Late Bronze Age (*Fig. 3*; Muller 2001: 148 Fig. 3a). After that the tradition of this motif breaks off, at least as far as the known material tells us. Later on, recessed door and

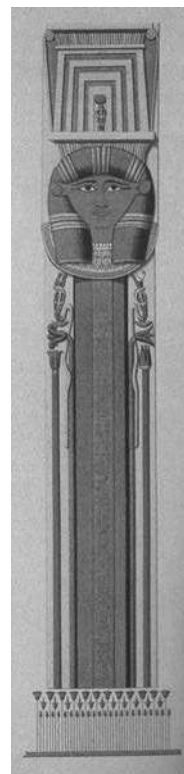


Fig. 2

³ See the examples in Schroer and Keel 2005: Nos. 115.117f. The serekh-sign does not necessarily indicate gates, but maybe just recesses in the wall structure of the palace as they appear from earliest times in Egyptian palace architecture.

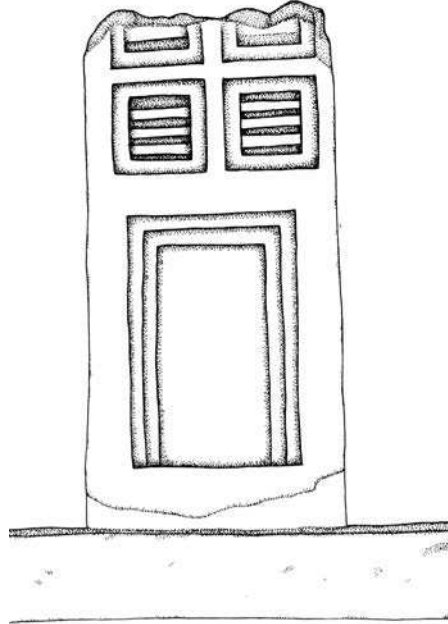


Fig. 3

window frames experienced a revival, especially in 9th century representations of architecture, particularly from ivory art. In Syro-Phoenician ivory carvings the motif of the woman in the window was popular. The window may be a palace or a temple window. The high-ranking woman often is shown with a sign on her forehead, which would associate her with a deity, probably a goddess. All these examples are dated considerably later than the shrine model from Khirbet Qeiyafa. This is also true of some Cypriot objects in ivory and the tomb architecture of Tamassos (Shiloh 1979: Pl. 18) with “real” recessed entrances. The Doric architecture with its triglyphs⁴ is several centuries later than the model from Khirbet Qeiyafa and at best can be taken as evidence for the regional extent of the reception of certain motifs.

The material and form of the limestone model from Khirbet Qeiyafa are unique when compared to other known shrine models.⁵ As Béatrice Muller (2002: I 143–144) states, models from the Near East are practically always made out of clay, though possibly versions made out of wood also existed. Models from Egypt are made out of wood, stone or fired clay, those from

⁴ The thesis, that these triglyphs represent the ends of load-bearing beams, is not uncontested (Weickenmeier 1985).

⁵ Kletter mentions a very small limestone *naos* from Gezer, dated to the Hellenistic period by Macalister (1912: 439, Pl. 225,6), but possibly from the Iron Age. The proportions and the form of the entrance show some, but not a strong similarity with the Khirbet Qeiyafa shrine.

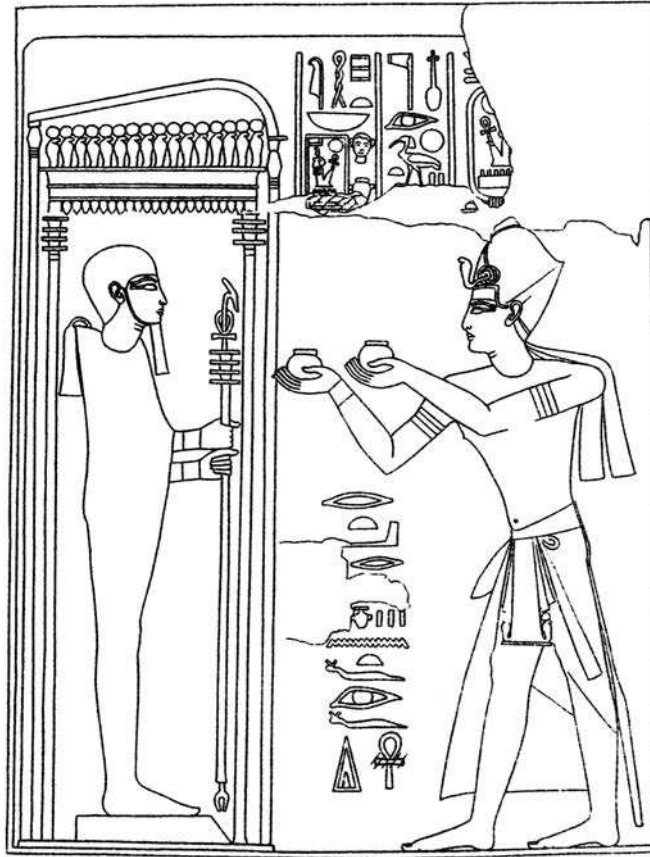


Fig. 4

Greece in their majority from clay, but some from stone as well.⁶ It is not only unusual for a shrine model to be made out of limestone, but in this case its size and proportions are also quite outstanding.

The limestone model from Khirbet Qeiyafa is approximately twice the size of the clay model found nearby, which corresponds more to the average dimensions of these objects. The depth of the model indicates that in the back part of the shrine there probably was a standing, less likely a sitting, figurine of a deity. This is confirmed by the depression in the base near the back wall. The two holes in the back wall were made so that the figurine could be secured with a copper wire or a string. They would not have been needed to stabilize the shrine itself, as it would have stood steady on a leveled surface. Similarly, the clearly recognizable indentations in the door frame, to which a door could be

⁶ The Greek models with their typical ridge roofs will not be considered, partly due to their late dates.

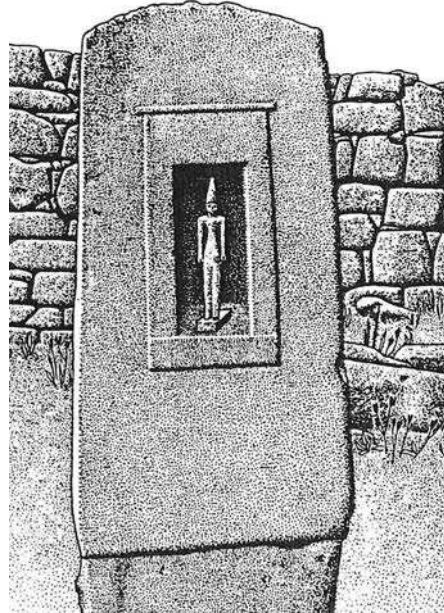


Fig. 5

attached with the help of wooden sticks or a bolt, also suggest that the shrine contained the image of a deity, which probably was made out of metal. A door only makes sense if it can be closed and opened, because something or someone is on the inside. As part of the cult, the shrines or temples of gods were closed or opened at specific times in set rituals. The limestone model therefore insinuates a shrine or long-room temple.

Broad-room temples are more closely aligned with the rural population, as Othmar Keel (2007: 289) points out, following Helga Weippert. In these less elaborate building complexes the light coming from the entrance immediately falls on the cult image and makes it visible. This effect is not desired for long-room temples. The cult image remains in darkness, far from the entrance.⁷ The limestone model from Khirbet Qeiyafa has a greater height than width and also a greater depth than width, as well as rectangular and almost smooth surfaces. This shape is reminiscent of the cultic shrines or small chapels that stood in Egyptian temples, as shown e.g. in a depiction of Sethos I offering wine in

⁷ In case of the shrines which represent dwelling places for gods or goddesses, the type of the temple room does not necessarily imitate an existing temple at a special place; the shrines are not architectural models in the closer sense (Muller 2002: I 197–205). The visual effect of Egyptian temple architecture with recessed entrances hiding the sanctuary in the center or background of the temple can be experienced until today, e.g. when entering the large temple of Ramses II. at Abu Simbel. Much later, from the Roman period, is a relief from Meroë depicting recessed temple portals and a stela depicting Osiris in the back (Keel 1997: Fig. 238).

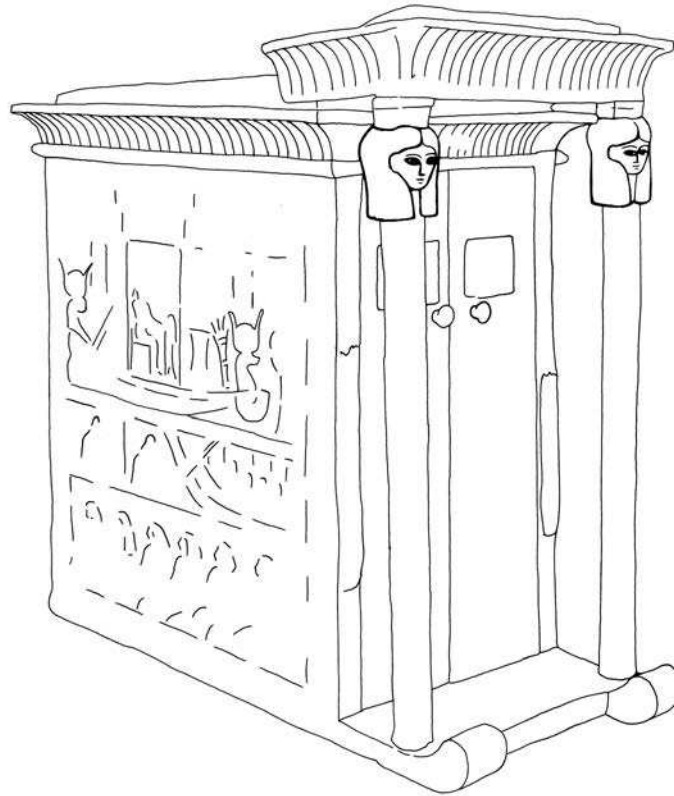


Fig. 6

front of the Ptah chapel in Abydos (Fig. 4; Schroer 2011: No. 718), or the *na-os*, which was carried by numerous so-called naophorous statues coming up from the 18th dynasty on, in front of their bodies. In Byblos such shrines made out of stone and containing small bronze figurines of gods were already known from the Middle Bronze Age (Fig. 5; Bretschneider 1991: Taf. 134 Fig. 64).

The high shape of such a shrine is known from a clay model from the eastern yard of the Late Bronze temple of Kamid el-Loz (Kletter 2015: 35 Fig. 4.14 A13). A fluted lintel covers the high, rectangular entrance. Slender pilasters are indicated. The door with the decorative lintel molding is typical for Egyptian representations of shrines, as a wooden model from Deir el-Medineh, 19th dynasty (Fig. 6; Schroer 2007: 442 Fig. 24) illustrates. A model from Tell Munbaqa in Syria (Kletter 2015: 49 Fig. 4.59 E1), probably from the Late Bronze Age, is also relatively high (height 30 cm; width 24 cm; depth 20 cm) and even though it otherwise has no decoration, it does have two rows of pastille-like applications and there are traces of a fixture for a closing lid in the entrance. A model from Hazor, Late Bronze Age (Kletter 2015: 49 Fig. 4.60

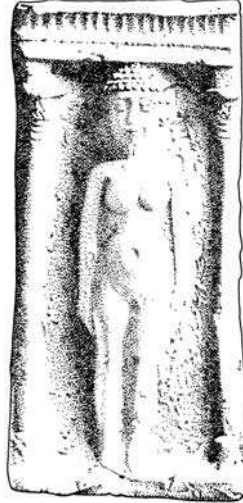


Fig. 7

E2) of similar dimensions and a box-like shape (height 30 cm) could also be closed by a small door.⁸

A further artifact, which has a similar entrance design as the limestone model of Khirbet Qeiyafa and even may be from approximately the same time period, is the limestone Iron Age IIA mold, supposed to come from the Gaza area, currently in the Hecht Museum (*Fig. 7*; Mazar 1985: 12f No. 23 *Fig. 20*; Bretschneider 1991: Taf. 89 Abb. 78 cat. No. 85; drawing by Myriam Röthlisberger). This mold was used to produce small plaques (the height of the mold is 9.7 cm). It does not exhibit any triglyphs, but rather a typical Egyptian fluted frieze, probably with uraeus snakes. Overall, it appears to imitate Egyptian style. Clay plaques of this type have been found at other sites. In the entrance there is always a goddess or a goddess with a worshiper.⁹

The Clay Shrine

The clay shrine (*Fig. 8*; Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2015: 110) was found not far from the limestone shrine (Room G and Room H are part of Building C10) and is approximately half the size with a height of 16 cm and a width of 11 cm. In this case also, the reconstruction of the object is certain, even though some

⁸ The already mentioned shrine from Yavneh (Kletter 2015: Pl. 3,1–3 CS47) is made of clay, not limestone and will be discussed below, though it roughly shares the box-like shape with the Khirbet Qeiyafa limestone model.

⁹ Compare the Egyptian limestone object (from the antiquities market, New Kingdom) with a naked goddess in the entrance portal shown in Keel 2008: No. 9, and one with the goddess and a smaller devotee beside her (Keel and Schroer 2010: 182 *Fig. 158a*).

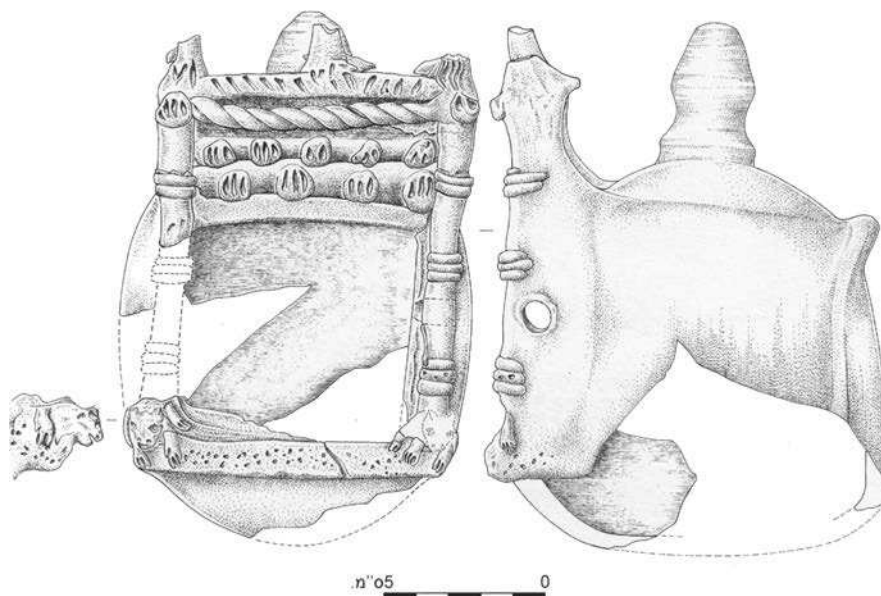


Fig. 8

pieces are missing. The height and depth are clearly less emphasized in comparison to the width. The material, fired clay, the shape and the decorative elements or applications indicate that this model derives from Syrian and Levantine traditions.

The core shape of the model is based on a spherical vessel. The base and the walls were modified to make the house stable. A knob is attached at the top, which may have served as a handle. The roof is slightly arched. On one side the vessel is open and in front of this opening a gate portal with rich decorations has been attached. Two pillars flank the entrance. They are offset from the door towards the front, but are not free-standing. They are divided into three parts by disc-like intermediate elements – ribbons, according to Garfinkel. On both pillars the lower element consists of three discs and the upper of two. The pillars rest on bases, namely lion heads, though just one of them has been preserved. Directly above the lintel a horizontal beam structure with a total of three beams is recognizable. On it are two rows of round applications with usually three notches. The lower row has four, the upper five of these applications. More of these are also located on the left and right near the top of both pillars. At the top of the façade are two additional beams or decorative moldings. The upper one is decorated with notches, the other with a braided pattern. Three doves sat originally on the ridge of the temple model, but they are only partly preserved. The large holes to the left and right of the door opening are quite noticeable. A small wooden or metal bar could have been inserted here to hold the door. Even though a door is missing, it should be assumed that



Fig. 9

it would have fitted exactly into the opening and would have been made out of wood or clay, parallel to other objects, where such doors have been preserved.

A simple, painted broad-room house made out of clay is already known from Early Bronze Arad (Kletter 2015: 30 Fig. 4.2). But a Late Bronze model from Kamid el-Loz (Kletter 2015: 45 Fig. 4.48 D1) is more similar in its basic shape. This, however, had two free-standing pillars, which were probably made out of wood and have not been preserved. The extruding double ridge should be noted.

In its shape the clay model from Khirbet Qeiyafa shows the influence of vessel-like and hut-like models that were present in the whole Levant and in Cyprus from the Late Bronze to the early Iron Ages. Sometimes they are described as “beehive-shaped” or called “fenestrated clay vessels”. Already the famous Middle Bronze calf from Ashkelon has a clay shrine, which seems like a tall vessel with a small portal cut into its side (Kletter 2015: 34 Fig. 4.4 A1). Several bulbous clay shrines have been found in Late Bronze contexts in Kamid el-Loz and in Tell Deir Alla.¹⁰ Versions that have kept their jar shape to a greater degree were produced in Ugarit (Kletter 2015: 35 Fig. 4.17–18 A17–18) and in the Iron Age in Tel Dan, Tel Hadar and Tel Kinrot (Kletter 2015: 35

¹⁰ See the inventory of these and shrines from other places by Kletter 2015: 34 Fig. 4.5–13; 35 Fig. 4.15–21 and Zwickel 2015: 179 Fig. 14.1–8.

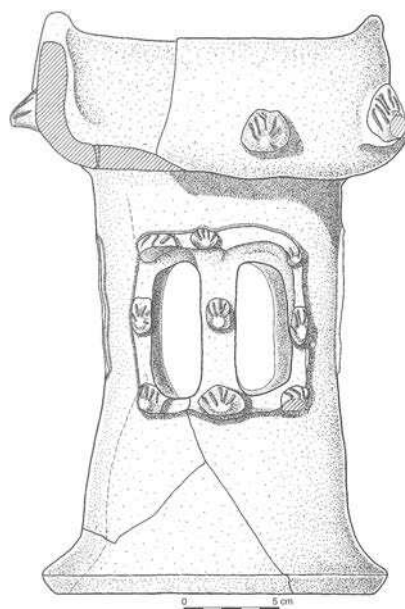


Fig. 10

Fig. 4.19–21).¹¹ An object that has been published more frequently is the painted round model from Archanes on Crete from the 11th century. In its entrance sits an enthroned goddess in epiphany gesture (*Fig. 9*; Orthmann 1975: Abb. 444; drawing by Inés Haselbach). Luckily in this case the door of the shrine was preserved (Marinatos and Hirmer 1986: Pl. 144 door closed und Pl. 145 door open). The painting around the door opening might insinuate a recessed frame, but this is speculative. The opening at the top, which can be traced back to its vessel form, is used in this case by two devotees to peek inside. A model from Transjordan dated to the 10th century has a round vessel form with a lid at the top¹² (*Fig. 18* further below). Here we already meet the dove and two pillars with palm capitals.

The characteristic rows of notched, round applications are known from the older, Late Bronze, Syrian pottery stands.¹³ Whether these applications were

¹¹ Compare Nissinen and Münger 2009. From Tell Zera comes an undecorated shrine of this type found in an Iron Age I domestic context, which was made from a bulbous vessel with handles by cutting a door into its side (Gropp 2013: 439 TZ 005552–001, 005552–010 and 005552–014). Through the use of an additional handle, the door could be easily removed and put in place again. Hut-like models are known from the Graeco-Cypriot realm, e.g., from the Astarte temple in Kition, dating approximately to 1000 BCE (Karageorghis 1976: Pl. 66–67; Bretschneider 1991: Fig. 66–67).

¹² Kletter 2015: 45 Fig. 4.53 D9, in the Rockefeller Museum.

¹³ Muller 2002: II 90 Fig. 83 (a house model from Emar), II 125–127 Fig. 116–118 (cult stands from Munbaqa).

meant to imitate the ends of roof beams is uncertain or under discussion. On some stands they are placed close together above the window openings (*Fig. 10*; Muller 2002: 97 *Fig. 88* from Tell Fray, 13th century BCE), so that an interpretation as beams seems unlikely. Braided or plait patterns indicate a connection with textiles, such as headwear, blankets or maybe curtains.¹⁴

From the Early Iron Age onwards, small shrines are sometimes decorated with lion protomes, birds and human figures. But these objects generally do not come from excavations, so that the dating is comparative and style-orientated. Nevertheless, there exists a consensus on the dating. No such model was so far known from Judah. The following should be mentioned, because they share features with the Khirbet Qeiyafa clay shrine.¹⁵

The above mentioned shrine from Transjordan, belonging to the Rockefeller Museum, resembles the Khirbet Qeiyafa clay shrine in its composition, based on a round vessel with a fronton attached to it (*Fig. 11*; Muller 2002: 200 *Fig. 180b.180d*; Kletter 2015: 45 *Fig. 4.53 D9*). The entrance is flanked by pillars with volute capitals, the pillars being detached from the shrine, though not free standing. In the tympanum a dove with spread wings is sitting. This model should be considered as contemporaneous to the Khirbet Qeiyafa shrine. A shrine model in Beirut (*Fig. 12*; Bretschneider 1991: Taf. 84 Abb. 73a-b No. 78; Kletter 2015: 46 *Fig. 4.54 D10*) shows distinctive recessed frames at the entrance. Two naked women with necklaces flank the entrance, their hands placed on the belly. There was a bird above each woman's head, but one is missing, the other one difficult to recognize on photos. A similar and probably contemporaneous model is said to come from Karak in Jordan (*Fig. 13*; Schroer 2007a: *Fig. 8*; Kletter 2015: 46 *Fig. 4.55 D11*). The women are decorated with a scarf and jewelry and hold a hand drum in front of their left breast. These two shrines might be later than they had been considered by Bretschneider and others (11th century). There are several probably later terracotta models, which should be noted here briefly. One is now in the Moussaieff collection (*Fig. 14*; Maier and Dayagi-Mendels 2007: *Fig. 1–2* and Pl. XX; Kletter 2015: *Fig. 4.44 C9*). The female drummers stand beside a guardian lion (only one survived) at the entrance, palm capitals and female busts in the tympanum complete this richly decorated model.

¹⁴ Compare the early Iron Age terracotta figurine from Taanach (Lapp 1964: 39–40 *Fig. 21*). Corded patterns are also known from friezes, e.g., on the Aḥiram sarcophagus from Byblos, where they could be understood as the fringe of a blanket covering the sarcophagus (Montet 1928–1929: Pl. 130; Schroer 2011: No. 962). A clay shrine from Tel Rehov, but dated to the 9th century, has an entrance that can be closed by a door and a decorative band with notches above it (Kletter 2015: 36 A24). Three human heads (of sphinxes?) are placed above the door.

¹⁵ Kletter distinguishes a “Jordanian” C-group with large frontons and a heterogeneous D-group, the latter probably including pieces from the early Iron Age II (Kletter 2015: 41–52). The selection of pieces in this article follows the iconography, not the typology of the shrines, but tries to pay attention to the chronology.

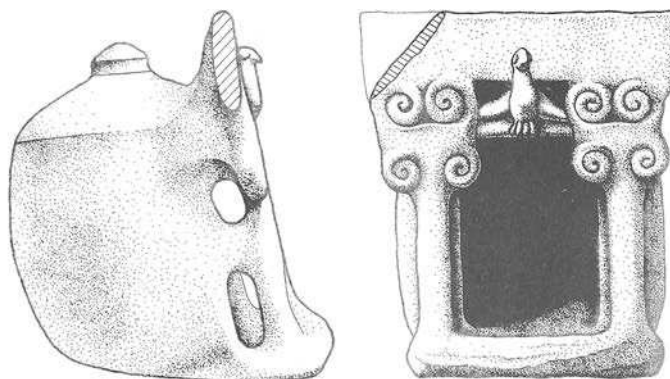


Fig. 11

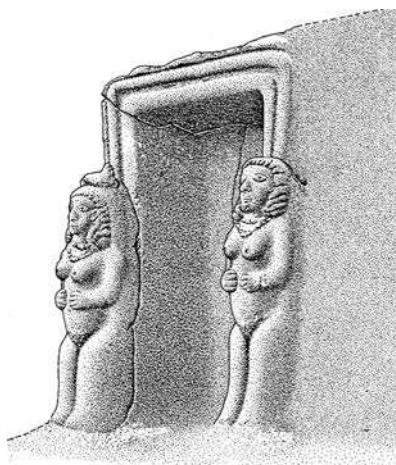


Fig. 12



Fig. 13

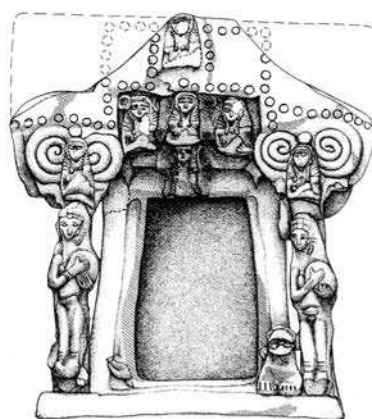


Fig. 14

There are models without a goddess, one from the Hecht Museum with pillars and leave capitals, and a dove sitting in the tympanum (*Fig. 15*; Schroer 2007: 434 *Fig. 12*; Kletter 2015: 42 *Fig. 4.43*), one with pilasters and volute capitals from Tell el-Far'ah North (*Fig. 16*; Keel and Uehlinger 1998: *Fig. 188a*; Kletter 2015: 45 *Fig. 4.52 D7*). In this case, instead of the dove or female busts, we find a crescent moon symbol above the entrance. In addition to shrine models with figures, the Yavneh clay shrine, which was published only recently (*Fig. 17*; Kletter 2015: 28 CS No. 47, Pl. 3,1–3; 22,1–4), has to be mentioned. Though it was made from a special clay, probably from the coast, its date (850–750 BCE) and style do not differ from the Yavneh cult stands. It is box-shaped and shows two free-standing, undecorated pillars and a flat roof. A slope or corded line and nine knobs can be seen above the entrance. This frieze reminds of the clay, but also of the limestone shrine of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

A recurring motif of the iconographical setting of the shrines are lions, lion bases or protomes. Lions also appear on cult stands, and in general the shrine models share some characteristic motifs with cult stands from the early Iron Age. A fragmentary cult stand from Pella dated to the 11th or the 10th century BCE does have a goddess with a lion figure on both sides and also braided friezes (*Fig. 18*; Potts *et al.* 1985: 204 with Pl. 42; Schroer 2007a: *Fig. 9*). One of the two well-known pottery stands from Taanach shows the goddess and also the ibex and tree motifs between standing guardian lions (Lapp 1969: 42–44). Doves are often encountered in connection with the clay shrines. But they are more likely to appear in the tympanum rather than on the roof.¹⁶ On the clay stands from Yavneh, which are somewhat later (2nd half of the 9th century or early 8th century; see Kletter, Ziffer and Zwickel 2010: 196), doves are completely lacking. Maybe plastic representations of doves were simply too fragile so that they were avoided.

However, we do find lions, including goddesses standing on lions, windows with a double frame, corded window sills, decorative bands with round applications, and also models with columns that have floral capitals (*Fig. 19–21*; drawings by Ulrike Zurkinden). The blossom capitals with notches are similar to the schematic applications with the three notches. So it seems that in Philistine Yavneh this Canaanite set of motifs has been maintained longer than in other regions, at least to the extent indicated by current excavation results.

One central message of the iconographic setting of the whole group of models is the link between shrine entrance, women, lions and doves. The entrance, in one case with recessed frames, is flanked by two women, either naked or robed, joining their hands underneath the breasts or holding a drum. In place of the women, some items have columns or pilasters, which may have volute capitals.

¹⁶ But see the cult stand from Beth-Shean with traces of three doves on the top, all of them broken and lost (Rowe 1940: Pl. 17,1; 57A,1–2).

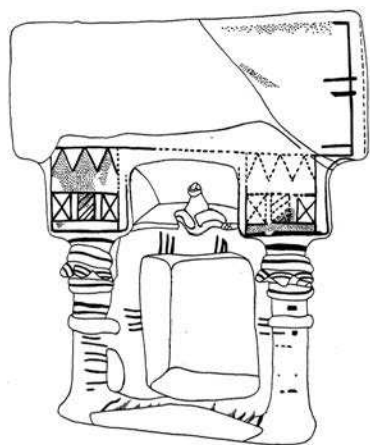


Fig. 15

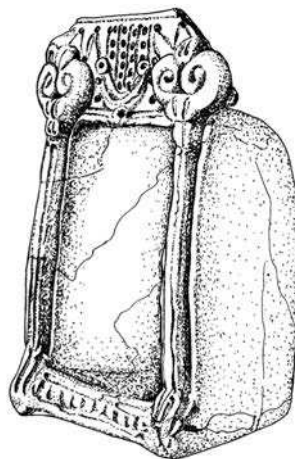


Fig. 16

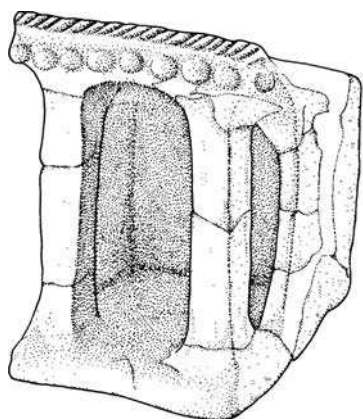


Fig. 17

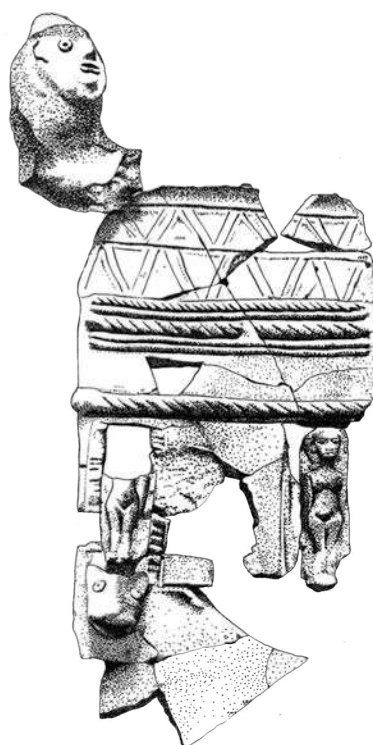


Fig. 18

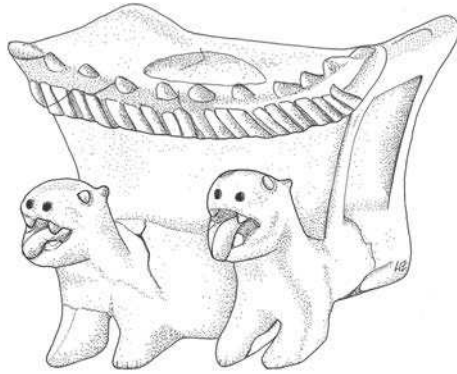


Fig. 19

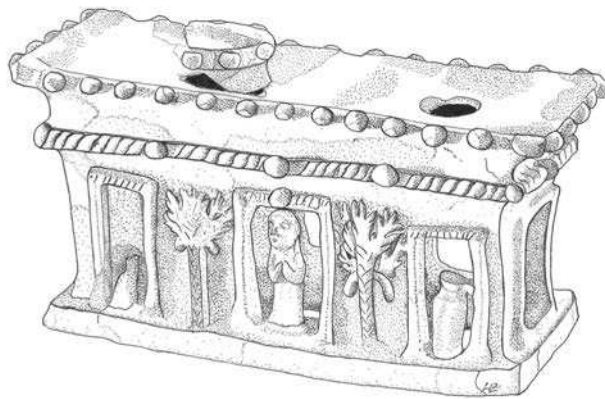


Fig. 20

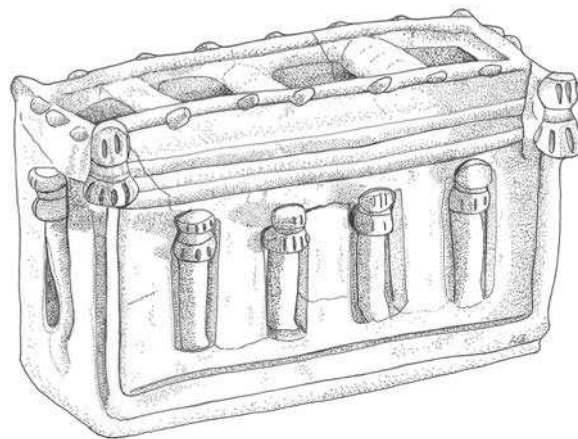


Fig. 21

The iconographic program that is associated with temple models of this type is Classical Syrian or Canaanite in its provenience. This can be illustrated well with the famous wall painting of the entrance to the throne room from the palace of Mari, which probably dates to the time of Yaḥdun-Lim (1810–1794 BCE). The picture, partially damaged in antiquity, portrays the temple of the goddess Ishtar (*Fig. 22*; Margueron 2004: 424 and Pl. 56; Schroer 2008: No. 434). The king's encounter with the goddess, who in typical pose places one foot on a lion, can be seen in the upper part of the temple building. The scene is flanked by LAMA-goddesses with typical intercessory gestures; another god with a horned crown approaches from the right. In the lower part of the building fountain goddesses in long robes are visible. The temple is situated in a large garden. Date palms are depicted on the outside, though just one of them is completely preserved. Several men are shown climbing these palms to either fertilize or harvest them. In the crown of the (preserved) palm is a large, over-dimensional dove. Stylized or pruned trees near the temple also are part of the garden. Guardian creatures with or without wings protect the temple precinct in pairs, at the bottom bull-like creatures with human heads (the heads are not well preserved) and above them sphinx-like creatures.

At the outer zone of the temple garden intercessory goddesses like those inside the temple are visible. This Classical Syrian picture from Mari displays figures and attributes of earlier Mesopotamian and Old Babylonian art. The dove and fountain goddesses are elements with the clearest Syrian provenience.

The clay shrine from Khirbet Qeiyafa and similar decorated models take up the stylized trees, the guardian creatures and the doves as iconographic elements. The naked or at least erotic goddesses at the entrance correspond to the protective LAMA-goddesses of Syrian provenience, though these were dressed. Even though the cult image in the shrine has not been preserved, one can conclude from the iconographic setting that it would have portrayed a goddess – not Ishtar, but one of the local Canaanite goddesses, who could also be accompanied by lions.

Conclusions

The two temple models from Khirbet Qeiyafa were found in a cultic context. It is unlikely to be coincidence that they were found so close to each other. Probably the limestone model originally stood on the small *bamah* in Room G (Garfinkel, *supra* page 35 with *Fig. 29*). It is not clear where the smaller clay shrine would originally have been kept. Both models show commonalities, but also marked differences. Both had a door that could be closed; with high probability both originally contained a small cult image. It is rare that such figurines are still found inside the shrine, especially if they were made out of metal and therefore had a high material value.

But the holes to attach doors, the holes in the back wall of the limestone model to hold an assumed cult image, and the depression in front of the back wall all are evidence that the shrines contained small images of deities, which later were either plundered or brought into safety.

If the two shrine models are considered as a pair, a hierarchy is suggested by their respective material and size. The limestone model is made out of durable material and relatively large, in its decoration it appears simple, but artistically advanced. The clay model is considerably smaller, made from less valuable material, and decorated with figurative elements. The artist's work is careful, but not of high quality, as is shown, e.g., by the preserved lion. The models represent two different types of shrines or cult rooms, one a long-room, the other a broad-room temple. The limestone model is fairly unique in its appearance, even if some evidence could be pointed out for its relationship with the Egyptian tradition. The clay model corresponds in shape and decoration to the types common in the Eastern Mediterranean. Nissinen and Mürger have drawn attention to the fact that the distribution of shrines with a round body is centered on the northern Jordan Valley (in both Cisjordan and Transjordan) and that they show Mycenaean influence.¹⁷ The clay shrine demonstrably is associated with the worship of a goddess. It is tempting to interpret the two models as the dwellings of a male, in this case higher-ranking god and his consort. But this remains completely speculative. It cannot be excluded that the limestone shrine also belonged to a goddess. Interestingly enough the recessed frame entrance occurs at least once in connection with naked goddesses (*Fig. 10*). So the two shrine models from Khirbet Qeiyafa, in spite of their obvious differences in material, measure, style and decorative elements, do not necessarily refer to different cults or worshippers.

The connection made by Garfinkel between the triglyphs, in particular, and the biblical texts in 1 Kings 6–8, which describe the different parts of the temple and the palace of Solomon, are interesting and do indeed illuminate some quite obscure passages in the chapters in question. If an important temple was somewhere nearby, it is certainly possible that features such as the triglyphs would be emphasized in any model. But the temple in Jerusalem at the time of David cannot have been a YHWH-temple built under David. If there was a temple in Jerusalem at the time, it would have been an older temple dedicated to a sun god, but according to Keel (2007: 221–337) this is unlikely. The temple of Jerusalem was only built under Salomon in the older precinct of a holy place dedicated to the sun, which by that time was without a temple building. In the interior of the Salomonic temple Canaanite and Phoenician traditions were incorporated. This assumption is supported by the description of the interior and the artistic motifs, as well as the tradition of a construction contract between Solomon and Hiram of Tyros, which is incorporated into the report. That the limestone model from Khirbet Qeiyafa with its unique architectural

¹⁷ Nissinen and Mürger 2009: 135–137, including a catalogue of artefacts.



Fig. 22

characteristics also showed these influences is possible. But a direct association probably cannot be made. Nevertheless, Garfinkel's assumption that in Khirbet Qeiyafa we have early representative types of a developing Judahite architecture is debatable.

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Afterthoughts on Qēyāfah

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The first notion that comes to the reader's mind after perusing this volume probably is identical with the first impressions to be gained from any other publication on Khirbet Qeiyafa: Qēyāfah is controversial. Controversy, on the other hand, is a strong indicator of relevance. For the history of Israel and Judah in the early 10th century BCE, Qēyāfah is important, and everybody agrees to that.

It is controversial whether Qēyāfah was part of the kingdom of David, of Saul, or of Gath. With gates leading to the west and south, but not to the north and east, it looks more like an eastern border fortress of Gath rather than a southwestern stronghold of a polity based in Jerusalem or Gibeon. There can be no doubt, however, that it was not garrisoned by Philistines. The band or company that manned it came from the mountains. This does not make Qēyāfah the true site of Ziklag, but it would provide the historical background to David's sojourn at Ziklag (David was hardly the only boss of an 'Apiru-band whom Gath took into its service).

It is controversial whether the Qēyāfah ostrakon can be read (and if so, how) or not. The arguments for 'not really' seem to be stronger, at least for the time being. This might not be coincidental. All the readable inscriptions in 10th century Proto-Canaanite are short 'labels' incised into pottery, or alphabets. Not every 'culture of writing' produced the whole range of documents to which we are accustomed. The Bedouin of eastern Syria in the Roman period (the so-called Safaites) had a script for their Arabic, which they used exclusively for graffiti (and tombs). For commercial or administrative purposes, they had to turn to Nabataean Aramaic or even to Greek – their Arabic had not yet the words and the syntax for dealings as such. The Germanic tribes of the Roman period had a script for their languages, the rhunes, which again were solely in epigraphic use. When they formed kingdoms of their own, their administrative language had to be borrowed from the Church. Only Latin had the vocabulary and the scribal practice needed for administration. There are indications that the administrative language of pre-Omride Israel was Phoenician. The scribe of the Qēyāfah ostrakon might have attempted to produce a text for which his language (and writing skills) were not yet ripe.

It should no longer be controversial that the hill people living at Qēyāfah worshipped several deities, and in the form of anthropological statuary. This need not necessarily dissociate them from the people over whom Saul (or David) ruled.

Controversies over the construction of 10th century history will continue, but the interpretation of the Qēyāfah assemblage will also continue to be of relevance to all possible positions.

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About this book

Excavations at the Early Iron Age site of Khirbet Qeiyafa (Israel), directed from 2007 to 2013 by Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor under the auspices of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Antiquities Authority, have attracted considerable scholarly and media attention since the very second season, when the discovery of an inscribed ostrakon sparked controversies over the site's historical significance and nature. Located at the entrance of the Elah Valley, protected by a casemate wall and two monumental gateways, the settlement of Qeiyafa existed for barely half a century. Its dating and the correlation of the archaeological evidence with the regional history, not least the rise of an early Judahite monarchy, have become matters of intense academic debate. Resulting from a colloquium of the Swiss Society for Ancient Near Eastern Studies, this volume offers a condensed report by main excavator Yosef Garfinkel as well as several in-depth studies on archaeological, historical, epigraphical, iconographical and biblical issues.

Zu diesem Band

Die von der Hebräischen Universität Jerusalem und der Israelischen Altertümerverwaltung unter Leitung von Yosef Garfinkel und Saar Ganor von 2007 bis 2013 durchgeführten Ausgrabungen in Khirbet Qeiyafa, am Eingang des Terebinthentals (Elah Valley), erregten von Anfang an erhebliches Aufsehen. Schon im zweiten Grabungsjahr wurde ein beschriftetes Ostrakon gefunden, das in der Fachwelt kontrovers diskutiert wurde. Da die von einer Mauer mit zwei Toren umgebene Siedlung nur während einer relativ kurzen Zeitspanne von 50 Jahren existierte, sind auch ihre Datierung und die Korrelation des archäologischen Befunds mit der frühen jüdischen Monarchie Gegenstand zahlreicher Debatten geworden. Der Band enthält Beiträge einer Tagung der Schweizerischen Gesellschaft für Orientalische Altertumswissenschaft. Ausgehend vom Bericht des Grabungsleiters Yosef Garfinkel werden archäologische, historische und bibelwissenschaftlich relevante, aber auch epigraphische und ikonographische Themen diskutiert und vertieft.